



File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Katherine Milton
Cape Fox Corporation
P.O. Box 8558
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear President Milton:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosure: (1)

cc: Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, R10 FLT's



Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

When and Where Was the Roadless Rule In Effect in Alaska? The Roadless Rule was adopted in January 2001, but due to litigation did not become effective and operational until April 2003. After three months of being in effect on the Chugach NF and Tongass NF, the Roadless Rule was again judicially enjoined on a nationwide basis and was not operational for the next three years. In September 2006, the Roadless Rule was judicially reinstated and became operational on the Chugach NF, but the Tongass NF remained exempt from the Rule because USDA had issued a temporary rule in 2003 exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule while it examined whether a state-wide exemption was appropriate. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska set aside the 2003 Tongass Exemption and reinstated the Roadless Rule (with special instructions) on the Tongass National Forest. The District Court's ruling was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Supreme Court declined further review.

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How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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President & CEO Charles Totemoff
Chenega Corporation
3000 C Street, Suite 301
Anchorage, AK 99503

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President Eydie Baller
Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association
P.O. Box 875046
Wasilla, AK 99687

Dear President Baller:

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Chairman Sheri Buretta
Chugach Alaska Corporation
3800 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 1200
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Chairman Buretta:

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President & CEO Sophie Minich
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
725 E. Fireweed Ln. #800
Anchorage, AK 99503

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Eklutna Incorporated
16515 Centerfield Drive, Suite 201
Eagle River, AK 99577

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Schmid", is positioned above the printed name.

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosure: (1)

cc: Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, R10 FLT's



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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Nancy Barnes
Eyak Corporation
P.O. Box 340
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear President Barnes:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

Lands Manager Judy Mason
Goldbelt, Incorporated
3025 Clinton Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Mason :

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

Chairman Lisa Lang
Haida Corporation
P.O. Box 89
Hydaburg, AK 99922

Dear Chairman Lang:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President & CEO Russell Dick
Huna Totem Corporation
9301 Glacier Highway, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President & CEO Dick:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Robert D. Mills
Kake Tribal Corporation
P.O. Box 263
Kake, AK 99830

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Kavilco Inc.
1000 2nd Ave, St 3320
Seattle, WA 98104-4078

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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Enclosure: (1)

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Art Demmert, Jr.
Klawock Heenya Corporation
P.O. Box 129
Klawock, AK 99925

Dear President Demmert:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Rosemarie Hotch
Klukwan Inc.
PMB 160 2440 E. Tudor
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear President Hotch:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Raymond Theodore
Knikatnu Incorporated
P.O. Box 872130
Wasilla, AK 99687

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

Chairperson Melissa Kookesh
Kootznoowoo Inc.
8585 Old Dairy Road, Suite 104
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chairperson Kookesh:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President & CEO Greg Encelewski
Ninilchik Native Association, Inc.
15730 Sterling Hwy, PO Box 39130
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear President & CEO Encelewski:

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

Chief Executive Officer John Sheperd
Port Graham Corporation
431 7th Avenue, Ste. 103
Anchorage, AK 99501

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosure: (1)

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Christopher Manfor
Salamatof Native Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear President Manfor:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President & CEO Anthony Mallott
Sealaska Corporation
One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 400
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President & CEO Mallott:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

Chief Executive Officer Tony Cange
Seldovia Native Association
P.O. Box A
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear Chief Executive Officer Cange:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President A.H. Millie Schoonover
Shaan-Seet Inc.
P.O. Box 690
Craig, AK 99921

Dear President Schoonover:

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Kenneth Cameron
Shee Atika Incorporated
315 Lincoln Street, Suite 300
Sitka, AK 99835

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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File Code: 1560
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Tatitlek Corporation
561 E. 36th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99503

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If you have any questions about the consultation process, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us or 907-586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosure: (1)

cc: Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, R10 FLT's



Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

The State of Alaska will work closely with the USDA Forest Service. The State will establish a task force reporting to the Governor concerning options for roadless management that will inform the USDA's consideration of the State's Petition for rulemaking. The rulemaking will be analyzed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

What is the timeframe for completion of an Alaska-specific roadless rule?

- *Late August, 2018* – begin a scoping period on the proposed rulemaking.
- *July 2019* – publish a draft environmental impact statement (EIS), start a comment period on the draft.
- *April 2020* – publish a final EIS.
- *June 1, 2020* – publish a final Alaska Roadless Rule





File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Michaelene Stephan
Tyonek Native Corporation
1689 C Street, Suite 219
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear President Stephan:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosure: (1)

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File Code: 1560
Date: July 30, 2018

President Tom Harrison
Yak-Tat Kwaan, Inc.
P.O. Box 416
Yakutat, AK 99689

Dear President Harrison:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

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cc: Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, R10 FLT's



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USDA Forest Service

OMB 0596-0217
FS-1500-19**MODIFICATION OF GRANT OR AGREEMENT**

PAGE 1 OF PAGES 15

1. U.S. FOREST SERVICE GRANT/AGREEMENT NUMBER:
18-DG-11100106-8102. RECIPIENT/COOPERATOR GRANT or
AGREEMENT NUMBER, IF ANY:3. MODIFICATION NUMBER:
024. NAME/ADDRESS OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE UNIT ADMINISTERING
GRANT/AGREEMENT (unit name, street, city, state, and zip + 4):Faydra Lampshire
U.S. Forest Service
State and Private Forestry
161 1st Ave, Door 8
Anchorage, AK 99501-1639
(907) 743-9462
faydralampshire@fs.fed.us5. NAME/ADDRESS OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE UNIT ADMINISTERING
PROJECT/ACTIVITY (unit name, street, city, state, and zip + 4):Dan Parrent
U.S. Forest Service
State and Private Forestry
161 1st Ave, Door 8
Anchorage, AK 99501-1639
(907) 743-9467
djparrent@fs.fed.us6. NAME/ADDRESS OF RECIPIENT/COOPERATOR (street, city, state, and zip +
4, county):Arlene Weber-Sword
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
550 West 7th, Suite 1450
Anchorage, AK 99501-3561
(907) 269-8471
arlene.weber-sword@alaska.gov7. RECIPIENT/COOPERATOR'S HHS SUB ACCOUNT NUMBER (For HHS
payment use only):**8. PURPOSE OF MODIFICATION**CHECK ALL
THAT APPLY:This modification is issued pursuant to the modification provision in the grant/agreement
referenced in item no. 1, above.

CHANGE IN PERFORMANCE PERIOD:



CHANGE IN FUNDING: Increase U.S. Forest Service funding by \$2,000,000 for a total of \$5,059,859



ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES:



OTHER (Specify type of modification):

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the Grant/Agreement referenced in 1, above, remain unchanged and in full
force and effect.

9. ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR DESCRIPTION OF MODIFICATION (add additional pages as needed):

10. ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION (Check all that apply):

Revised Scope of Work



Revised Financial Plan



Other: Cover, SF-424, SF-424A, Budget narratives

11. SIGNATURESAUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: BY SIGNATURE BELOW, THE SIGNING PARTIES CERTIFY THAT THEY ARE THE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF
THEIR RESPECTIVE PARTIES AND AUTHORIZED TO ACT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS FOR MATTERS RELATED TO THE ABOVE-REFERENCED
GRANT/AGREEMENT.11.A. ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FORESTRY SIGNATURE

(Signature of Signatory Official)

11.B. DATE
SIGNED

8/22/18

11.C. U.S. FOREST SERVICE SIGNATURE

(Signature of Signatory Official)

Michael Shephard

11.D. DATE
SIGNED

8/22/18

11.E. NAME (type or print): JOHN "CHRIS" MAISCH

11.F. NAME (type or print): DEBBIE A. HOLLEN

11.G. TITLE (type or print): State Forester

11.H. TITLE (type or print): Director, State & Private Forestry
Pacific Northwest and Alaska Regions



USDA Forest Service

OMB 0596-0217
FS-1500-19

18-DG-11100106-810, Modification 2

12. G&A REVIEW

12.A. The authority and format of this modification have been reviewed and approved for signature by:

Faydra Lampshire
FAYDRA LAMP SHIRE

U.S. Forest Service Grants & Agreements Specialist

12.B. DATE
SIGNED

8/21/18



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF FORESTRY

550 West 7th Suite 1450

Anchorage, AK 99501

Main: 907.269-8463

Fax: 907.269-8421

August 10, 2018

Faydra Lampshire
Grants Management Specialist
USDA Forest Service
Region 6 & 10
161 East 1st Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Faydra Lampshire:

Please accept the State of Alaska, Division of Forestry's application for Modification 2, Federal 2018 Cooperative Forestry Grant/ Consolidated funding in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 as stated in the letter to John "Chris" Maisch dated August 9th, 2018. This application includes the additional funding offered under State Fire Assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arlene Weber-Sword".

Arlene Weber-Sword
Fire Staff Officer

Enclosure

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:

- ☐ Preapplication
☒ Application
☐ Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:

- ☐ New
☐ Continuation
☒ Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

A: Increase Award

* Other (Specify):

* 3. Date Received:

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

18DG-11100106810 Mod 2

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

399170

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

State of Alaska

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):

92-600185

* c. Organizational DUNS:

1111880790

d. Address:

* Street1:

550 West 7th Ave Suite 1450

Street2:

* City:

Anchorage

County/Parish:

* State:

AK: Alaska

Province:

* Country:

USA: UNITED STATES

* Zip / Postal Code:

99501-3561

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:

Natural Resources

Division Name:

Forestry

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:

* First Name:

Arlene

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Weber-Sword

Suffix:

Title:

Fire Staff Officer

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number:

907-269-8471

Fax Number:

907-269-8471

* Email:

arlene.weber-sword@alaska.gov

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

USDA Forest Service

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

10.664

CFDA Title:

Cooperative Forestry Assistance

* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

N/A

* Title:

N/A

13. Competition Identification Number:

N/A

Title:

N/A

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Forest Stewardship, Forest Health, Urban & Community Forestry, State Fire Assistance, Volunteer Fire Assistance

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

* a. Applicant

01

* b. Program/Project

01

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

05/01/2018

* b. End Date:

04/30/2023

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal

2,000,000.00

* b. Applicant

2,000,000.00

* c. State

* d. Local

* e. Other

* f. Program Income

* g. TOTAL

4,000,000.00

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.☒ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment)**☐ Yes☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

☒ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an Internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix:

* First Name:

John

Middle Name:

Chris

* Last Name:

Maisch

Suffix:

* Title:

State Forester

* Telephone Number:

907-451-2666

Fax Number:

907-451-2690

* Email:

chris.maisch@alaska.gov

* Signature of Authorized Representative:

* Date Signed

8/10/18

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget			Total (g)
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)		
1. Cooperative Forestry-SEA	10.664	\$	\$	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	2,000,000.00
2. State Match					2,000,000.00		2,000,000.00
3.							
4.							
5. Totals		\$	\$	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	4,000,000.00

SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY				Total (5)
	(1) Cooperative Forestry-SFA	(2) State Match	(3)	(4)	
a. Personnel	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 293,775.00	\$	\$	\$ 543,775.00
b. Fringe Benefits					
c. Travel	0.00				
d. Equipment	0.00				
e. Supplies	0.00				
f. Contractual	1,706,225.00	1,706,225.00			3,412,450.00
g. Construction	0.00				
h. Other					
i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)	1,956,225.00	2,000,000.00			3,956,225.00
j. Indirect Charges	43,775.00				43,775.00
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	4,000,000.00
7. Program Income	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$	\$	\$

Authorized for Local Reproduction

SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES					
(a) Grant Program	(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS	
8. Cooperative Forestry	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$	2,000,000.00
9.					
10.					
11.					
12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11)	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$	2,000,000.00
SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS					
	Total for 1st Year	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
13. Federal	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
14. Non-Federal	\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14)	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$	\$	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00
SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT					
(a) Grant Program	FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (YEARS)				
	(b) First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth	
16. Cooperative Forestry	\$	\$ 500,000.00	\$	\$ 500,000.00	\$
17.					
18.					
19.					
20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16 - 19)	\$	\$ 500,000.00	\$	\$ 500,000.00	\$
SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION					
21. Direct Charges:	\$1,956,225	22. Indirect Charges: \$43,775			
23. Remarks:	Indirect on personnel services only. Fringe benefits included in personnel services				

Proposal
FY 18 CPG Modification # 2
Federal # FY18DG-11100106-810 / State #399170

Purpose of the Project:

The Governor of the State of Alaska submitted a petition (per the requirements of § 553 of the Administrative Procedure Act) to the Secretary of Agriculture, seeking exemption from the nationwide rules governing management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. On June 1, 2018, the Secretary of Agriculture directed the Chief of the Forest Service to initiate a state-specific rulemaking for roadless management direction for the Tongass National Forest in Alaska on behalf of the Department. In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5), the State of Alaska is hereby established as a cooperating agency in the preparation of analysis and documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") associated with this rulemaking. The state-specific rulemaking process will include publishing a proposed rule for public review and comment and preparing an Environmental Impact Statement. For this project, the applicable "inventoried roadless areas" are those in Alaska that are described and defined in the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (66 FR 3243, 3272, Jan. 12, 2001), and "Alaska roadless areas" are those in Alaska that an Alaska-specific roadless rule would apply. It is anticipated that mutual agreement will be reached regarding an Alaska roadless area database for those roadless areas in Alaska prior to the development of specific regulatory language.

The State and the Forest Service cooperatively shall:

Establish a State-Forest Service Executive Steering Committee to coordinate the various aspects of implementation of the rulemaking process and the State and Forest Service involvement in NEPA Interdisciplinary teams;

Establish and maintain clear lines of communication, working through the principal contacts;

Cooperate in the development of specific regulatory language for a proposed state-specific rule to establish management direction for Alaska roadless areas;

Jointly develop a detailed work plan that sets out required action steps, milestones, and time frames associated with all aspects of this rulemaking effort;

Cooperate in the preparation of analyses and documentation, development of the description of the proposed action and any alternatives, and the compilation of any required ecological, social, and economic resource information associated with this state-specific roadless rulemaking; and

Coordinate the development of the proposed state rule with the existing land management planning efforts in progress within the State of Alaska.

Budget

\$250,000 in personnel services to be utilized by DOF senior management proportionally to their involvement in the project.

\$43,775 indirect charge on personnel services @ 17.51%.

\$1,706,225 in contractual expenses to convene and facilitate a group with a diverse mix of state-specific interests to inform the State's input as a cooperating agency in the rule making process.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

As Members of Congress interested in protecting our public lands and environment, we are writing to express strong opposition to efforts to roll back the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) in Alaska or elsewhere.

Over the last two decades, the Roadless Rule has proven itself as a bedrock conservation protection for approximately 58.5 million acres of our national forests. At its core, the rule serves to limit costly and environmentally-damaging roadbuilding and logging as well as to help protect taxpayers and preserve wild, high-value conservation lands across the National Forest System. The Roadless Rule helps preserve these places while still providing significant management flexibility for activities including mechanized recreation, connections between communities, hydropower development, mining access roads, fire prevention and public safety.

In addition to protecting high value conservation lands, the Roadless Rule provides a myriad of benefits including clean water, unmatched recreational and tourism opportunities, and wildlife habitat supporting hunting, commercial and recreational fishing, as well as habitat for many threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. With more than 240 million people living within 100 miles of a national forest or national grassland, roadless areas have undoubtedly contributed billions to the U.S. outdoor recreation economy, which in 2017 generated \$887 billion in consumer spending and 7.6 million direct jobs nationally, and \$59.2 billion in state and local tax revenue.

The Roadless Rule is of national importance, and any move to provide exemptions or weaken these protections in Alaska would fundamentally erode the successes its protections have achieved to date. Of the more than 58 million acres of Inventoried Roadless Area, Alaska contains nearly 15 million acres between the Chugach and Tongass National Forests. Lands in the Tongass National Forest, home to some of the largest remaining tracts of temperate old-growth rainforest in the world, account for about 9 million of these acres. Protected by the Roadless Rule, this ecosystem stands as the country's single most important national forest for carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation. With parts of Alaska warming at roughly twice the rate of the rest of the planet, maintaining this critical ecosystem advances climate change solutions for both our national and international climate efforts.

Strong, continued protections for roadless areas in Alaska and elsewhere will also help save taxpayers millions of dollars by limiting costly new road building in remote areas with outsized building costs. It will also allow the Forest Service to focus its resources on maintaining the over 371,000-mile network of national forest system roads, which currently has an estimated maintenance backlog of \$3.2 billion.

Because of the many benefits and flexibilities of the Roadless Rule, it received comments from roughly 1.6 million people with 95% voicing support for strong roadless area protections during the multi-year public process to create it. At the time, this represented the most robust public engagement in the history of federal rulemaking. In the decades since, the American people have continued to express support for strong conservation protections for our public lands and roadless national forests.

In the State of Alaska's petition for a Roadless Rule exemption, we see the same arguments that multiple courts have now rejected in favor of upholding the process and the content of the Roadless Rule. This rule is working exceptionally well in Southeast Alaska, protecting national forest land from roadbuilding and commercial logging while providing flexibility for numerous other activities. Throughout the state, the Forest Service has reviewed, and approved - typically within two months of an application - dozens of projects in roadless areas including 29 mining projects, 9 hydro or intertie projects, a geothermal lease, and even an aerial tram. Simply speaking, there is no need for a blanket waiver to a system that is operating precisely as it is intended.

Logging is no longer a driving force of the Southeast Alaskan economy and attempts to restore the industry should not come at the expense of the thriving and growing tourism and recreation economies which continue to provide sustainable jobs and revenue to the region. Additionally, a state-specific rulemaking would itself be costly and time consuming, driving limited Forest Service resources away from other regional priorities, and creating fractures between the regional and national coalitions and stakeholders who share the long-term goal of continuing the growth of Southeast Alaska's economy. This would be particularly counterproductive since this growth is increasingly dependent on the intact, unspoiled ecosystems that make the Tongass such a cherished and sought-after place to visit.

As the deliberations around this historic and significant rule proceed, we ask that you please weigh our strong opposition to any exemptions or exceptions to the Roadless Rule in Alaska or elsewhere.

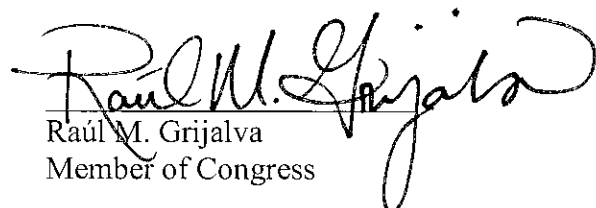
Additionally, in consideration of the national importance of the Tongass to the Roadless Rule, we would respectfully request the Forest Service provide further opportunities for the public to weigh in – both with in-person meetings outside Alaska, at the very least in the Pacific Northwest, as well as a comment period longer than only 45 days.

Thank you for considering our strong opposition to weakening the critical protections afforded by the Roadless Rule.

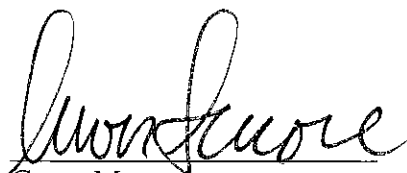
Sincerely,



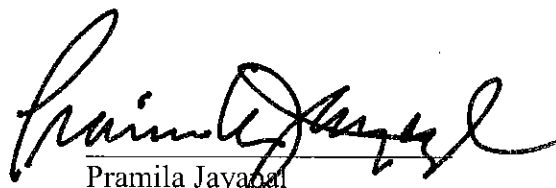
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



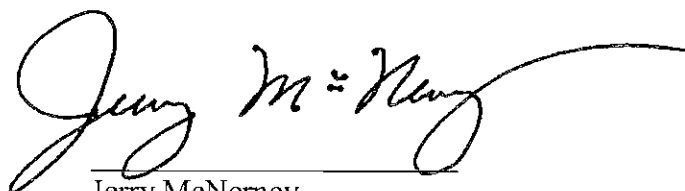
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



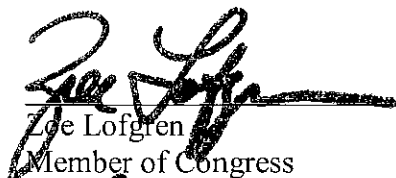
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



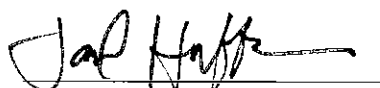
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



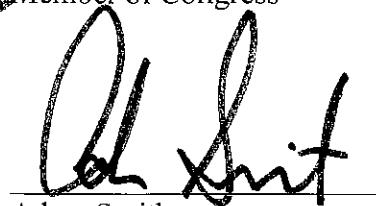
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



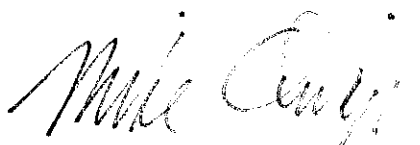
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress



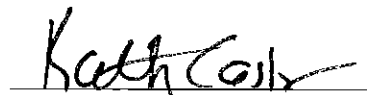
Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



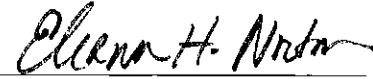
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



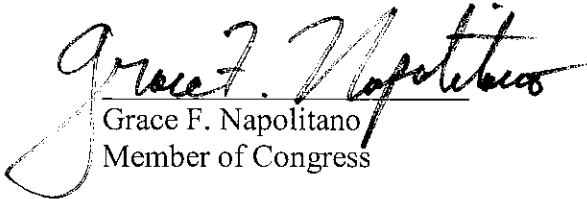
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



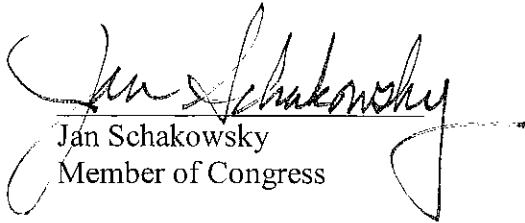
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



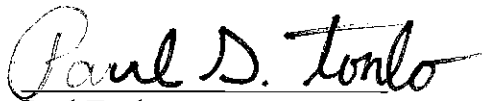
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



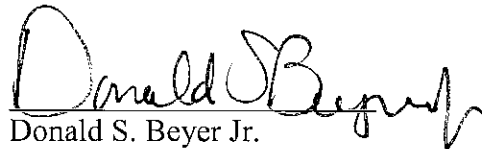
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



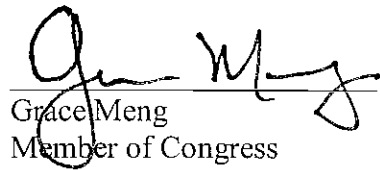
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



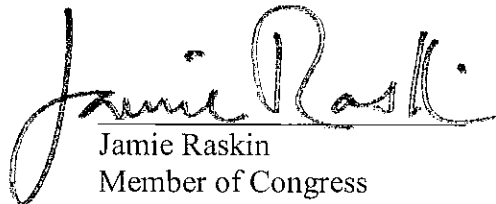
Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



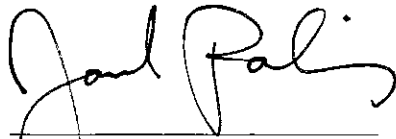
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



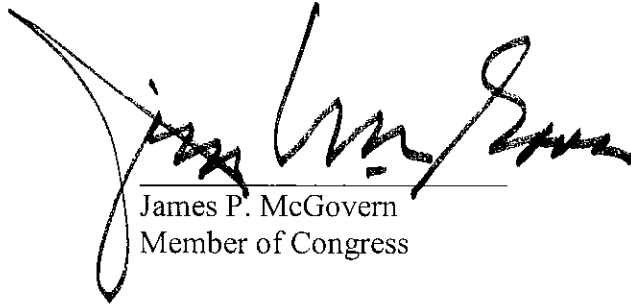
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



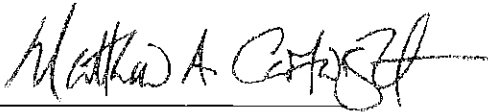
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



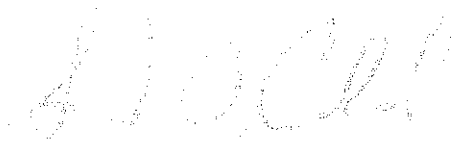
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



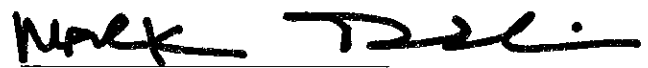
Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



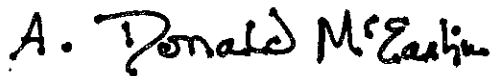
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



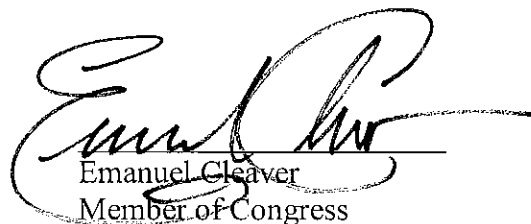
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



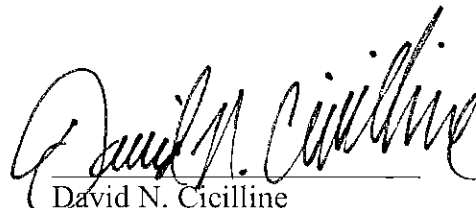
Donald A. McEachin
Member of Congress



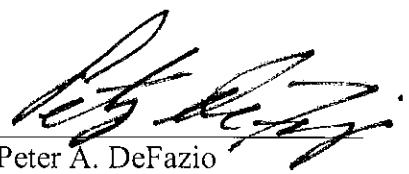
Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress



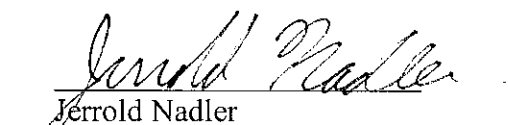
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



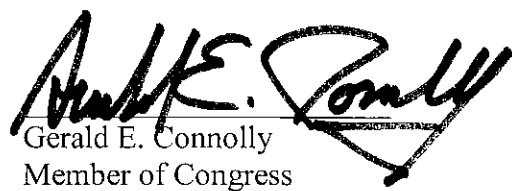
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



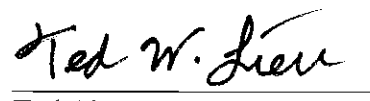
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



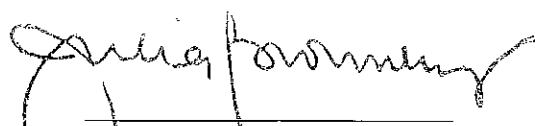
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



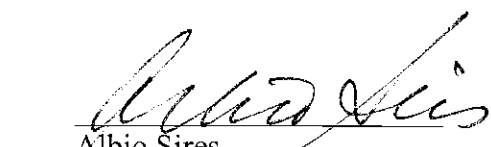
Ted Lieu
Member of Congress



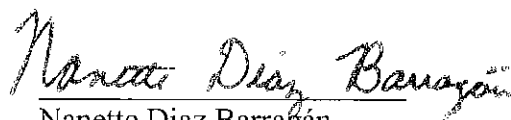
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress



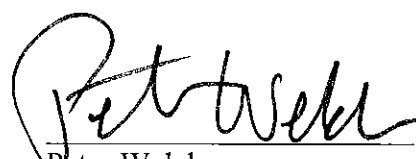
Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress

CC: Chris French, Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 11, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We are writing to express strong opposition to efforts to undermine the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) in Alaska and elsewhere.

The Roadless Rule is an indispensable conservation tool responsible for the protection of approximately 58.5 million acres of our national forests. The Roadless Rule was the product of, at the time, the most robust public engagement process on record. 1.6 million people commented on the Roadless Rule with 95% voicing support for strong protections for roadless areas. In the decades since, the American people have continued to support strong conservation protections for our public lands and roadless national forests.

At its core, the Roadless Rule is about preserving wild, high conservation value lands across the National Forest System. The Roadless Rule helps preserve these places while providing significant management flexibility for activities including mechanized recreation, connections between communities, hydropower development, mining access roads, fire prevention and public safety. In Alaska, the Forest Service has reviewed, and approved, typically within a month, dozens of projects within roadless areas including 36 mining projects, 10 hydropower or intertie projects, a geothermal lease, and even an aerial tram.

In addition to protecting high value conservation lands, the Roadless Rule provides clean water, unmatched recreational and tourism opportunities, and wildlife habitat supporting hunting, commercial and recreational fishing, as well as habitat for many threatened, endangered, or sensitive species.

More than 240 million people live within 100 miles of a national forest or national grassland providing access to abundant opportunities for spectacular outdoor recreation. More than 60 million Americans get their clean drinking water from our national forests, and roadless areas contain all or portions of 354 municipal watersheds. Roadless areas nationwide provide important habitat for fish and wildlife in our national forests, including more than 2,100 threatened and endangered species.

The Roadless Rule is of national importance, and any move to provide exemptions or weaken these protections in Alaska would fundamentally erode the successes of the Roadless Rule. Alaskan forestlands contain approximately 25% of all inventoried roadless areas totaling about

15 million acres, more than any other state. In addition, Alaskan roadless areas and forests provide ecosystems services that reach beyond Alaska.

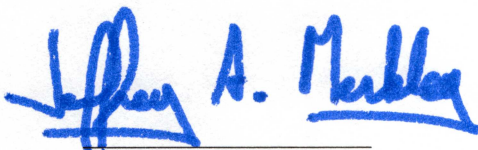
The Tongass National Forest is home to more than 9 million acres of roadless area. The Roadless Rule helps protect much of the ecosystem, helping make it the country's single most important national forest for carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation. As parts of Alaska are warming at roughly twice the rate of the rest of the planet, maintaining an intact Tongass ecosystem can help provide climate change solutions for Alaska and international climate efforts. The Tongass National Forest also serves as the spawning ground for 25% of the West Coast's annual salmon harvest.

Additionally, a state-specific rulemaking itself will be costly and time consuming, driving limited Forest Service resources away from other priorities. For example, strong, continued protections for roadless areas in Alaska and elsewhere save taxpayers millions of dollars by limiting costly new road building and allow the Forest Service to focus on maintaining the more than 371,000 mile network of National Forest System roads.

In southeastern Alaska and in timber communities across the country, our forest economies are changing which creates new opportunities for economic development. Undermining the Roadless Rule will be costly and likely come at the expense of the thriving and growing tourism and recreation economies which provide sustainable jobs and revenue to the region and are increasingly dependent on intact, unspoiled ecosystems.

We strongly urge you against granting any exemptions or exceptions to the Roadless Rule in Alaska or elsewhere. As this process continues, we respectfully request additional opportunities for the public to weigh in with in-person meetings outside Alaska, at the very least in the Pacific Northwest and Washington, DC, as well as a comment period longer than 45 days.

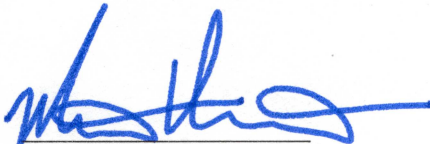
Sincerely,



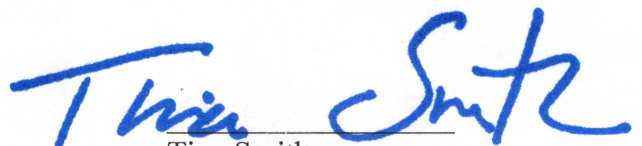
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



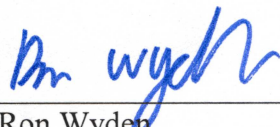
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



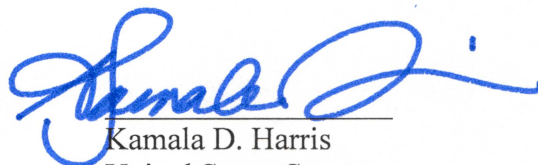
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



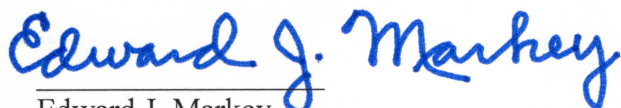
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



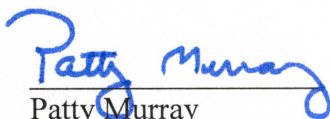
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



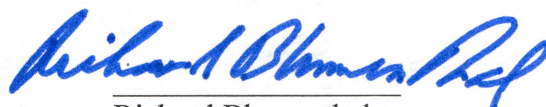
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



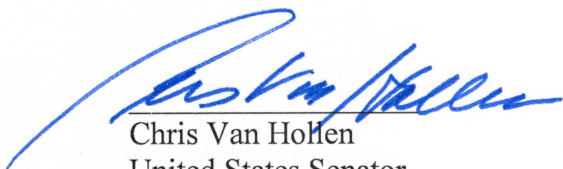
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



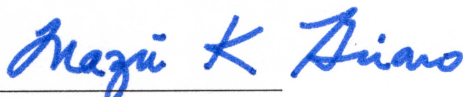
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Ruben Gallego
U.S. House of Representatives
1218 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congressman Gallego:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

The public scoping period referenced in the Notice of Intent published in September closed on October 24, 2018. As part of the scoping period, FS hosted 18 community meetings across Alaska and in Washington, D.C., to provide information and answer questions about the rulemaking process. In addition, FS plans to host another round of public meetings in summer 2019 with the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and will seek public comment on the proposed rule. I appreciate your participation in this process by providing your comments.

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Tongass National Forest. FS values its collaboration with the State, local communities, and other partners as we strive for shared stewardship of our public lands. A similar response is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sonny Perdue", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
U.S. House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
U.S. House of Representatives
125 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congressman Lowenthal:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
U.S. House of Representatives
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Darren Soto
U.S. House of Representatives
1429 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Thank you for your interest in the management of the Tongass National Forest. FS values its collaboration with the State, local communities, and other partners as we strive for shared stewardship of our public lands. A similar response is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Primila Jayapal
U.S. House of Representatives
319 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congresswoman Jayapal:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20215

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Blumenauer:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jerry McNerney
U.S. House of Representatives
2265 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McNerney:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
U.S. House of Representatives
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lofgren:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jared Huffman
U.S. House of Representatives
1406 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Huffman:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Adam Smith
U.S. House of Representatives
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Smith:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Luis Gutiérrez
U.S. House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gutiérrez:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Anthony Brown
U.S. House of Representatives
1505 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Brown:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Mike Quigley
U.S. House of Representatives
2458 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Quigley:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman DeGette:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Kathy Castor
U.S. House of Representatives
2052 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Castor:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
2136 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Holmes Norton:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Mark Pocan
U.S. House of Representatives
1421 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pocan:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
U.S. House of Representatives
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Schakowsky:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.
U.S. House of Representatives
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pascrell:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
U.S. House of Representatives
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
U.S. House of Representatives
2186 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Kaptur:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Paul Tonko
U.S. House of Representatives
2463 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Tonko:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Donald Beyer Jr.
U.S. House of Representatives
1119 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Beyer:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sincerely,

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Grace Meng
U.S. House of Representatives
1317 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
U.S. House of Representatives
431 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Raskin:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jared Polis
U.S. House of Representatives
1727 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Polis:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable James McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
U.S. House of Representatives
1034 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cartwright:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Yvette Clarke
U.S. House of Representatives
2058 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Clarke:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Salud Carbajal
U.S. House of Representatives
212 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Betty McCollum
U.S. House of Representatives
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman McCollum:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
U.S. House of Representatives
2083 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Roybal-Allard:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier
U.S. House of Representatives
115 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman DeSaulnier:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Donald McEachin
U.S. House of Representatives
314 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McEachin:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Emanuel Cleaver
U.S. House of Representatives
2335 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cleaver:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable David Cicilline
U.S. House of Representatives
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cicilline:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
U.S. House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Nadler:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Gerald Connolly
U.S. House of Representatives
2238 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Connolly:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Ted Lieu
U.S. House of Representatives
236 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lieu:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Julia Brownley
U.S. House of Representatives
1019 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Brownley:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Albio Sires
U.S. House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Sires:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Thank you for your interest in the management of the Tongass National Forest. FS values its collaboration with the State, local communities, and other partners as we strive for shared stewardship of our public lands. A similar response is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Nanette Diaz Barragán
U.S. House of Representatives
1320 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Diaz Barragán:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Jackie Speier
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Speier:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 07 2018

The Honorable Peter Welch
U.S. House of Representatives
2303 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Welch:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your comments on development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (FS) to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Jeffrey Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Heinrich:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Smith:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Harris:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Edward Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Udall:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Benjamin Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Cardin:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Richard Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Durbin:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Robert Menendez
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Menendez:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 13 2018

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Senator Hirono:

Thank you for your letter of October 11, 2018, cosigned by your colleagues, with your comments regarding development of a state-specific roadless rule for Alaska. I apologize for the delayed response.

In response to a petition from the State of Alaska, I instructed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to initiate a public rulemaking process to address roadless area management concerns on the Tongass National Forest. Our approach to rulemaking aims to build a broad coalition of support for a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule to address needs such as economic development while still conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Sonny Perdue
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUN 5 2019

The Honorable Joel Jackson
President
Organized Village of Kake
Post Office Box 316
Kake, Alaska 99830

Dear President Jackson:

Thank you for your letter of February 5, 2019, cosigned by President Lee Wallace, requesting a government-to-government consultation on the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule. I appreciate your deep connection to southeast Alaska and value our relationship in shaping land and natural resource management in this special place. I apologize for the delayed response.

The Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment remains available to discuss your concerns regarding the Alaska-specific Roadless Rule. To uphold our government-to-government relationship, Forest Service leaders nationally and in the Alaska region will continue to reach out to discuss additional ways to engage in meaningful consultation.

I appreciate your work with the Forest Service on issues affecting the Tongass National Forest, in particular roadless areas and their management. I value our collaboration with Tribes in southeast Alaska as we strive for shared stewardship of these significant landscapes.

A similar response is being sent to President Wallace.

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Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUN 5 2019

The Honorable Lee Wallace
President
Organized Village of Saxman
Route 2 Box 2 (Saxman)
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Dear President Wallace:

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A similar response is being sent to President Jackson.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sonny" being more prominent than the last name "Perdue".

Sonny Perdue
Secretary



Organized Village of Kake

PO Box 316
Kake, Alaska 99830
Telephone: 907.785.6471
Fax: 907.785.4902



February 5, 2019

Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Honorable Secretary Perdue:

On behalf of the Organized Village of Kake and the Organized Village of Saxman, we request an official government to government consultation with you regarding the proposed Alaska-specific roadless rule. As federally recognized Indian Tribes organized under the Indian Reorganization Acts of 1934 and 1936, our citizens share a deep connection with the incredible waters, lands, and resources of Southeast Alaska; a connection forged by our ancestors over the past 10,000 years --- since time immemorial.


On August 30, 2018, you announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's intent to initiate an environmental impact statement (EIS) and public rulemaking process to address an Alaska-specific roadless rule for management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska. Before that announcement, neither your office, the Forest Service, nor State of Alaska attempted to consult or collaborate with our Tribes.

Alaska Governor Walker convened a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) last fall to advise the State of Alaska on this important topic; however, only one Alaska Native was appointed to represent the interests of all seventeen federally recognized Indian Tribes from Southeast Alaska. This was a gigantic and unrealistic burden for one individual. The other Alaska Native appointed to the CAC represented Sealaska Corporation, the for-profit Alaska Native Regional Corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and state law for Southeast Alaska -- is not an Indian Tribe.

While the Forest Service has included some Southeast Alaska Indian Tribes as "cooperating agencies" during preparation of this EIS, the frantic pace necessary to satisfy some preordained timeline imposes substantial burdens on those Tribes hoping to be at the table when decisions are made on an Alaska-specific roadless rule. Given the harms and delays caused by President Trump's shutdown, we are further concerned that careful and informed consultation between our Tribes, your office, and the Forest Service may become little more than an afterthought.

Consequently, as elected leaders of our Tribes, we respectfully request to consult with you directly about the Alaska-specific roadless rule this spring. Since the decision to proceed with this rulemaking, and the ultimate decision, is yours, we believe speaking directly with you is the most effective way of assuring you hear what we need to say. It takes effort, resources, and coordination to travel all the way to Washington D.C., but we hope our willingness indicates how important this issue is to our Tribe's citizens. Please let us know, as soon as possible, when we could meet directly with you. Thank you.

Respectfully,


Joel Jackson, President
Organized Village of Kake
P.O. Box 316
Kake, Alaska 99830
Ph: 907-785-6471


Lee Wallace, President
Organized Village of Saxman
Rt. 2, Box 2 (Saxman)
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
Ph: 907-247-2502



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Angoon Community Association
Ms. Jennette Kookesh
President
P.O. Box 328
Angoon, Alaska 99820

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

The publication of the proposed rule and DEIS initiates a 60-day public comment period. Public information meetings will be scheduled in select communities in Southeast Alaska and in Anchorage, Alaska and Washington, D.C. during this comment period. Subsistence hearings (Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) will also be scheduled immediately following the public meetings in Southeast Alaska. The meetings/hearings schedule, community times, locations, and other information will be located on the project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/roadmain/roadless/alaskaroadlessrule>.

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- 4) Fax: 907-586-7852; or
- 5) In-person delivery to USDA Forest Service, 709 W. 9th Street, Room 535B, Juneau, Alaska, 99801.

Comments may also be submitted through a link on the Alaska Roadless Rule story map, accessible via the project website referenced above. All comments, including names and addresses, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection and copying.



USDA anticipates completing and publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) mid-year 2020.

I would like to repeat my invitation for government-to-government consultation on the proposed Rule and DEIS, which I extended to you on June 5, 2019. If you have any questions about the proposed Rule, DEIS, or the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Cape Fox Corporation
Lands Manager
Mr. Albert White
P.O. Box 8558
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Mr. Richard Peterson
President
320 West Willoughby Avenue, Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chenega Bay IRA Council
Mr. Larry Evanoff
President
P.O. Box 8079
Chenega Bay, Alaska 99574

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chenega Corporation
President and Director, CEO
Mr. Charles Totemoff
3000 C Street, Suite 301
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chickaloon Village
Mr. Gary Harrison
Traditional Chief
P.O. Box 1105
Chickaloon, Alaska 99674

Dear Tribal Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association
President
Ms. Eydie Baller
P.O. Box A75046
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chilkat Indian Village
Ms. Kimberly Strong
President
HC60 Box 2207
Haines, Alaska 99827

Dear Tribal Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chilkoot Indian Association
Mr. Georgiana Hotch
President
P.O. Box 490
Haines, Alaska 99827

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Chugach Alaska Corporation
Chairman of the Board
Ms. Sheri Buretta
3800 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 1200
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)
President/ CEO
Ms. Sophie Minich
725 E. Fireweed Ln. #800
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Corporate Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Craig Tribal Association
Mr. Clinton E. Cook Sr.
President
P.O. Box 828
Craig, Alaska 99921

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Douglas Indian Association
Mr. Clarence Laiti
President
811 W. 12th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Eklutna Incorporated
CEO
Mr. Curtis J. McQueen
16515 Centerfield Drive, Suite 201
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Native Village of Eklutna
Mr. Aaron Leggett
President
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, Alaska 99567

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

English Bay Corporation
Manager
Mr. Steve Vogler
237 E. Fireweed Ln. St. 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Eyak Corporation
President
Ms. Nancy Barnes
P.O. Box 340
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Goldbelt, Incorporated
Lands Manager
Ms. Judy Mason
3025 Clinton Drive
Juneau, Alaska 99801

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Haida Corporation
Chairman
Mr. Alvin Edenshaw
P.O. Box 89
Hydaburg, Alaska 99922

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Hoonah Indian Association
Mr. Frank Wright, Jr.
President
P.O. Box 602
Hoonah, Alaska 99829

Dear Tribal Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Huna Totem Corporation
President/CEO
Mr. Russell Dick
9301 Glacier Highway, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Corporate Leader:

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- 5) In-person delivery to USDA Forest Service, 709 W. 9th Street, Room 535B, Juneau, Alaska, 99801.

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I would like to repeat my invitation for government-to-corporation consultation on the proposed Rule and DEIS, which I extended to you on June 5, 2019. If you have any questions about the proposed rule, DEIS, or the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Hydaburg Cooperative Association
Mr. Sidney Edenshaw
President
P.O. Box 349
Hydaburg, Alaska 99922

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Kake Tribal Corporation
President
Mr. Robert D. Mills
P.O. Box 263
Kake, Alaska 99830

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

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File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Kavilco Inc.
President
Mr. Louis L. Jones
1000 2nd Ave, St 3320
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Ms. Dawn Nelson
Executive Director
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Ketchikan Indian Community
Mr. Norman Skan
President
2960 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Klawock Cooperative Association
Ms. Yodean Armour
President
P.O. Box 430
Klawock, Alaska 99925

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Klawock Heenya Corporation
President
Ms. Theresa Fairbanks
P.O. Box 129
Klawock, Alaska 99925

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

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File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Klukwan Inc.
President
Ms. Rosemarie Hotch
PMB 160 2440 E. Tudor
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Knikatnu Incorporated
President
Mr. Raymond Theodore
P.O. Box 872130
Wasilla, Alaska 99687

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

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File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Knik Tribal Council
Mr. Mike Tucker
President
P.O. Box 871565
Wasilla, Alaska 99687-1565

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Comments may also be submitted through a link on the Alaska Roadless Rule story map, accessible via the project website referenced above. All comments, including names and addresses, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection and copying.



USDA anticipates completing and publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) mid-year 2020.

I would like to repeat my invitation for government-to-government consultation on the proposed Rule and DEIS, which I extended to you on June 5, 2019. If you have any questions about the proposed Rule, DEIS, or the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Kootznoowoo Inc.
Chairperson
Ms. Melissa Kookesh
8585 Old Dairy Road, Suite 104
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Corporate Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

The publication of the proposed rule and DEIS initiates a 60-day public comment period. Public information meetings will be scheduled in select communities in Southeast Alaska and in Anchorage, Alaska and Washington, D.C. during this comment period. Subsistence hearings (Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) will also be scheduled immediately following the public meetings in Southeast Alaska. The meetings/hearings schedule, community times, locations, and other information will be located on the project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/roadmain/roadless/alaskaroadlessrule>.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Metlakatla Indian Community
Mr. Karl Cook
Mayor
P.O. Box 8
Metlakatla, Alaska 99926

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Nanwalek IRA Council
Mr. John Kvasnikoff
First Chief
P.O. Box 8028
Nanwalek, Alaska 99603

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Native Village of Eyak
Mr. Darrel Olsen
President
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Native Village of Salamattoff
Ms. Penny Carty
President
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, Alaska 99611

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Native Village of Tatitlek
Ms. Nanci Robart
President
P.O. Box 171
Tatitlek, Alaska 99677

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Native Village of Tyonek
Mr. Alfred Goozmer
President
P.O. Box 82009
Tyonek, Alaska 99682

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Ninilchik Native Association, Inc.
President, CEO
Mr. Loren Prosser
15730 Sterling Hwy, PO Box 39130
Ninilchik, Alaska 99639

Dear Corporate Leader:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Ninilchik Traditional Council
Mr. Richard Encelewski
President
P.O. Box 39070
Ninilchik, Alaska 99639

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Organized Village of Kake
Mr. Joel Jackson
President
P.O. Box 316
Kake, Alaska 99830

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Organized Village of Kasaan
Mr. Ronald Leighton
President
P.O. Box 26-KXA
Kasaan, Alaska 99950

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USDA anticipates completing and publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) mid-year 2020.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Organized Village of Saxman
Mr. Lee Wallace
President
Route 2, Box 2, Saxman
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Petersburg Indian Association
Ms. Chris Morrison
President
P.O. Box 1418
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

Dear Tribal Leader:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Port Graham Corporation
CEO
Mr. John Sheperd
431 7th Avenue, Ste. 108
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Corporate Leader:

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Sincerely,

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Port Graham Village Council
Mr. Patrick Norman
Chief
P.O. Box 5510
Port Graham, Alaska 99603

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Salamatof Native Association, Inc.
President
Mr. Christopher Manfor
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, Alaska 99611

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Sealaska Corporation
President/CEO
Mr. Anthony Mallott
One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 400
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Seldovia Native Association
CEO
Mr. Don Kashevaroff
P.O. Box A
Seldovia, Alaska 99663

Dear Corporate Leader:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Seldovia Village Tribe
Ms. Crystal Collier
President
P.O. Box L
Seldovia, Alaska 99663

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Shaan-Seet Inc.
President
Mr. Ed Douville
P.O. Box 690
Craig, Alaska 99921

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Shee Atika Incorporated
President
Dr. Kenneth Cameron
315 Lincoln Street, Suite 300
Sitka, Alaska 99835

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USDA anticipates completing and publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) mid-year 2020.

I would like to repeat my invitation for government-to-corporation consultation on the proposed Rule and DEIS, which I extended to you on June 5, 2019. If you have any questions about the proposed rule, DEIS, or the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David E. Schmid".

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Ms. KathyHope Erickson
Chairman
456 Katlian Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

The publication of the proposed rule and DEIS initiates a 60-day public comment period. Public information meetings will be scheduled in select communities in Southeast Alaska and in Anchorage, Alaska and Washington, D.C. during this comment period. Subsistence hearings (Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) will also be scheduled immediately following the public meetings in Southeast Alaska. The meetings/hearings schedule, community times, locations, and other information will be located on the project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/roadmain/roadless/alaskaroadlessrule>.

How to Submit a Formal Comment: In order for a comment to be considered and become part of the record for the Alaska Roadless Rule, the written comment must be postmarked or date-stamped at the Forest Service office below within 60 days of the publication of the proposed rule in the *Federal Register*. Testimony provided at the subsistence hearings will also be recorded and become part of the record. Comments on the DEIS and proposed rule may be submitted via:

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- 3) Mail: USDA Forest Service, Attn: Alaska Roadless Rule, P.O. Box 21628, Juneau, Alaska, 99802;
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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Skagway Traditional Council
Ms. Jamie Bricker
President
P.O. Box 1157
Skagway, Alaska 99840

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Tatitlek Corporation
President
Mr. Roy Totemoff
561 E. 36th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Corporate Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Tyonek Native Corporation
President
Mrs. Michaelene Stephan
1689 C Street, Suite 219
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Corporate Leader:

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Sincerely,

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Wrangell Cooperative Association
Mr. Richard Oliver
President
P.O. Box 2021
Wrangell, Alaska 99929

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Yak-Tat Kwaan, Inc.
President
Ms. Shari Jensen
P.O. Box 416
Yakutat, Alaska 99689

Dear Corporate Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: October 18, 2019

Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
Mr. JP Buller
President
P.O. Box 418
Yakutat, Alaska 99689

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Enclosed is a copy of the proposed rule and the DEIS, along with a portable thumb drive which contains the summary of the DEIS, the DEIS, and a set of maps. Electronic copies of the proposed rule and DEIS, as well as other information, may be accessed on the Alaska Roadless Rule project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (3)

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke



File Code: 1010
Date: February 22, 2019

Dawn Jackson
Tribal Vice President
P.O. Box 26-KXA
Ketchikan, AK 99950

Dear Ms. Jackson:

First, thank you for joining us last week for the Cooperating Agency meeting in Juneau. Input from the Organized Village of Kake is greatly appreciated and we look forward to continuing to share information as we move through the Roadless Rulemaking process.

During the meeting you requested, in writing, details of our obligations under the National Historic Preservation Act, our outreach to the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the final outcome of those conversations.

In August and September 2018, the Alaska Roadless interdisciplinary team sought guidance from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Based on those talks, the interdisciplinary team determined that the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking effort is not an undertaking as defined in Part 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 800.16(y) and is therefore not subject to Section 106 review.

On September 13, 2018, the Forest Service requested concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer on this determination, and on October 8, 2018 the State Historic Preservation Officer did concur. Attached is the October 8 letter for your records.

If you have any questions or concerns with this determination, please contact Melinda Hernandez-Burke, Tribal Relations Specialist, at 907-586-7089.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Ken Tu





File Code: 1560; 1300
Date: February 8, 2019

Joel Jackson
President
Organized Village of Kake
PO Box 316
Kake, AK 99830-0316

Dear President Jackson:

Thank you for your letter dated January 31, 2019 requesting several items related to the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project including: 1) an extended deadline, as a cooperating agency, for review of the preliminary draft environmental impact statement; 2) justification for the project timeline; 3) a report of the comments received during public scoping; and 4) a detailed project timeline. I will do my best to address your requests with this letter, and look forward to further dialogue as we work together as cooperating agencies and through government-to-government consultation on this effort.

First, I would like to express my appreciation for your decision to sign a memorandum of understanding that joins us, along with the State of Alaska and six other federally recognized tribes, as cooperating agencies. As you expressed in your letter, this project is important to the future management of the Tongass National Forest. Your participation as a cooperating agency is highly valued and will undoubtedly improve the process that informs the Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in his decision on the final rule.

Due to the timeline established by the Secretary of Agriculture, I am unable to accommodate your request for an extension of time to review the preliminary draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). All cooperating agencies are subject to the same time constraints to provide early input into the development of the DEIS by our contractor. As a cooperating agency, you will have approximately five months (February 2019 – July 2019) for review and deliberation of the DEIS before the 60-day public comment period. In addition, the Forest Service will establish recurring cooperating agency meetings and/or conference calls between February and the public comment period for continuous opportunities to participate in the process of developing the DEIS. Finally, as a federally recognized tribe, I will initiate government-to-government consultation with the Organized Village of Kake on the DEIS before it is released for the public comment period.

You raised several points that I would like to address as the basis for your request to justify the current timeline. First, the 35-day partial government shutdown created individual and organizational challenges that will require some recovery time. During the partial government shutdown, the Forest Service contractor continued to develop the DEIS, resulting in minimal impacts to the overall rulemaking timeline. I am respectful and sensitive to any impacts it may have created for the Organized Village of Kake. As a result, I have made my staff available to meet with Kake and other tribes in their communities during the cooperating agency 14-day



review period to support the development of any input the Organized Village of Kake may have on the preliminary DEIS.

Your letter also provided a few examples of timelines for other roadless rulemaking efforts in Idaho and Colorado. Both examples illustrated that a period of 14 to 18 months passed between those state governments filing a petition for rulemaking and the public release of the DEIS. The Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project is on a similar timeline, whereas the Secretary of USDA accepted the State of Alaska's petition for rulemaking during April 2018 and the anticipated public release of the DEIS is July 2019; a period of 15 total months.

The reason for the pace of this rulemaking effort is due to the agency seeking to respond to a broader national public interest for improving efficiencies and reducing timelines in Forest Service environmental analysis and decision making processes. I believe the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project timeline is responsive to this national need, while still providing ample opportunity for meaningful engagement by tribes, other government agencies, stakeholder groups, communities, and the general public.

Enclosed are two documents, per your request, that include the public scoping report and detailed timeline. I appreciate your patience for waiting for these documents that will assist with your role as a cooperating agency and federally recognized tribe. If you have any further questions, or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me (907.586.8775) or Melinda Hernandez-Burke, Tribal Relations Specialist (907.586.7089).

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Melinda Hernandez-Burke, Chad VanOrmer

Alaska Roadless Rule Scoping Period: Written Public Comment Summary

Introduction

This report provides a summary of written public comments received for the Roadless Area Conservation Rule; National Forest System Lands in Alaska (Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule). The 45-day public comment scoping period following the Aug. 30, 2018 publication of the Notice of Intent of Proposed Rulemaking in the *Federal Register* (83 FR 44252) ended Oct. 15, 2018. This report captures consistent and frequent comment themes found in the range of perspectives in written comments received, but is not exhaustive of all written comments. Please refer to the original letters located in the project reading room (<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//ReadingRoom?Project=54511>) for additional written public comment detail.

The overall objectives of this report are to:

1. Aggregate and summarize public comment themes.
2. Identify input for developing the draft environmental impact statement.
3. Identify other public concerns relevant to Alaska-Specific Roadless Rulemaking.

This report addresses these objectives throughout the following substantive sections:

1. Public Comment Overview
2. 2001 Roadless Rule
3. Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule
4. Southeast Alaska Timber Industry
5. Roadless Area Management Recommendations
6. Additional Scoping Period Comments

Background

In August 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated an environmental impact statement (EIS) and public rulemaking process to address the management of inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest within the State of Alaska. This rulemaking is the result of a petition submitted by Governor Bill Walker's administration in January 2018 on behalf of the State of Alaska, pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act. The petition was accepted by the Secretary of Agriculture in April 2018. The intent is to evaluate the regulatory exemption set forth in the petition, as well as to evaluate other management solutions that address infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation needs to further Alaska's economic development, while still conserving roadless areas for future generations. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is estimated to be released in early summer 2019, to be followed by another public comment period. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is estimated to be released in spring 2020, with a final rule expected in June 2020.



Section 1 – Public Comment Overview

During the public comment scoping period following the Aug. 30, 2018 publication of the Notice of Intent of Proposed Rulemaking in the *Federal Register* (83 FR 44252) which ended Oct. 15, 2018, just over 144,000 entries were logged. This total quantity includes:

- Form letters: 32,500
- Petitions: 110,000 signatures
- Unique submissions: 1,400

The majority of comments received opposed changing the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (hereafter the 2001 Roadless Rule) for Alaska.

Commenters provided both support for and opposition to the three general alternatives for the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule identified in the Notice of Intent. These general alternatives and a summary of comments supporting and opposing each alternative are listed below.

- A No Action Alternative - the 2001 Roadless Rule remains in effect on the Tongass National Forest.
 - No Action Alternative Support – Supporters of the current 2001 Roadless Rule, equivalent to the no action alternative, stressed concerns the Tongass National Forest’s ecosystem cannot support additional resource extraction and agency efforts should turn towards restoration of forest to a more pristine state.
 - No Action Alternative Opposition – Commenters who are opposed to the 2001 Roadless Rule generally noted that the current rule is too restrictive for certain industries that rely on the Tongass National Forest to exist. They also state that current regulations and policies, such as the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, provide sufficient environmental protections.
- A Full Exemption Alternative -- the 2001 Roadless Rule no longer applies to the Tongass National Forest.
 - Full Exemption Support – Supporters of the full exemption alternative generally indicated the economic stability of Alaska is dependent on resource extraction and the Tongass National Forest can support both resource extraction and a thriving ecosystem.
 - Full Exemption Opposition – Commenters opposed to the exemption alternative were generally supportive of maintaining current regulations, or making those regulations more restrictive, citing environmental concerns.
- An Alaska-specific Roadless Rule - an alternative management regime for Alaska roadless areas.
 - Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule Opposition – Commenters opposed to the Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule cited concerns that any change to the 2001 Roadless Rule (for Alaska) are unnecessary and not in the best interests of Alaska residents, industries that rely on the Tongass National Forest’s natural setting and environment, or the Tongass National Forest’s ecosystem.
 - Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule Support – Commenters providing support for the Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule generally stated Southeast Alaska’s ecosystem and economy are dependent on the Tongass National Forest and should not be managed in the same way as other national forests.



Section 2 – Application of Existing 2001 Roadless Rule

The majority of comments received supported the existing 2001 Roadless Rule as expressed by support for a no action alternative or as opposition to the Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule or full exemption alternatives. The rationale for continuing to support the 2001 Roadless Rule is wide-ranging, but generally included the following themes. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Existing 2001 Roadless Rule does not inhibit community development and economic growth.
- Tongass National Forest is of greater benefit to Alaskans as an intact ecosystem.
- Tongass National Forest is important to climate stabilization through carbon sequestration.
- Tongass National Forest should be respected as home to the Alaska Native community.
- Road construction and resource extraction are destructive to habitat.
- Maintenance of 2001 Roadless Rule is vital to tourism and fishing industries.
- Concern over purpose and need to modify the 2001 Roadless Rule.

Theme 1 – 2001 Roadless Rule Does Not Inhibit Community Development and Economic Growth

Commenters who wrote in support of the existing 2001 Roadless Rule stated the following reasons for their support of a no action alternative:

- 2001 Roadless Rule was adopted after intense analysis, thorough discussion, and with public support.
- 2001 Roadless Rule provides necessary protection for Tongass National Forest ecological health.
- 2001 Roadless Rule provides adequate opportunities for existing industries to continue operations within the Tongass National Forest and to initiate and develop new projects important for Southeast Alaska communities, and therefore does not inhibit community development and economic growth.
- Changes to the 2001 Roadless Rule would negate progress that has been made since implementation and set a negative precedent for enforcing environmental conservation regulations across the United States.

Theme 2 – Importance of the Tongass National Forest as an Intact Ecosystem

Commenters expressed support for maintaining the 2001 Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest because the forest is of greater benefit, locally and globally, as an intact ecosystem. Many commenters spoke specifically about the uniqueness of the Tongass National Forest as one of the last remaining old-growth temperate rainforests and this uniqueness should be protected. Additional benefits of the Tongass National Forest as an intact ecosystem include:

- Providing habitat to many plant and animal species, including some that are sensitive, threatened, or endangered.
- Clean water and habitats provided to fish and wildlife are essential to the ecological and economic health of Southeast Alaska communities and residents.
- Cultural significance to Alaska Native people.
- Providing spiritual and emotional benefits to residents and visitors.
- Effect on climate change by providing carbon sequestration benefits.



Theme 3 – Tongass National Forest is Essential to Climate Stabilization

Comments that were received in support of maintaining or increasing 2001 Roadless Rule protections on the Tongass National Forest were primarily centered on the function of the forest as a carbon sink. Comments provided views on both the benefits of old growth forests as a means of carbon sequestration in aiding climate stabilization, and the potential threat to the environment that could be posed if trees were utilized in a manner that released stored carbon to the atmosphere.

Theme 4 – Tongass National Forest as Home to Alaska Native People

Comments were received from members of Alaska Native Tribes indigenous to the Tongass National Forest, as well as from members of the public not affiliated with a Tribe, expressing concern that an increase in road construction, timber harvest, and industrial development on the forest would harm the cultural livelihood and spiritual well-being of Alaska Native Tribes, communities, and individuals. Related comments highlighted the vital role the Tongass National Forest plays in indigenous communities, for the harvest and use of natural resources for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, handicrafts, and trade, and also as a source of cultural and spiritual well-being.

Theme 5 – Road Construction and Resource Extraction is Destructive to Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Commenters in support of the 2001 Roadless Rule often discussed the negative impacts road construction, logging, and resource extraction have had on wildlife habitat across the Tongass National Forest and elsewhere. Highlighted negative effects generally included the following:

- Fragmentation of habitats by roads.
- Water quality impacts from sedimentation and polluted industrial runoff.
- Physical destruction of habitat.
- Long-term habitat impacts related to stem exclusion, loss of winter habitat, and other habitat concerns.

Commenters further stressed that fish and wildlife habitats cannot be easily recovered once physically destroyed by road construction or resource extraction.

Theme 6 – 2001 Roadless Rule Protections Support Tourism and Fishing Industries

Commenters noted industries, such as tourism, outdoor recreation, and commercial fishing provide a greater economic contribution to the economy of Southeast Alaska than the timber industry. Examples of how protections provided by the 2001 Roadless Rule are necessary for these industries and have supported Southeast Alaska communities include:

- Protecting habitat for commercial outfitter/guide activities such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.
- Protecting watersheds for commercial and subsistence fishing.
- Protecting landscapes that visitors come specifically to Southeast Alaska to view.
- Protecting species such as brown bears and bald eagles that visitors come to Alaska to view.
- Protecting unbroken wilderness and other wild landscapes that provide unparalleled opportunities for outfitter and guided outdoor recreation and ecotourism.



Theme 7 – Concern over Purpose and Need to Modify the 2001 Roadless Rule

Though comments in support of the 2001 Roadless Rule generally discussed the benefits of protecting the Tongass National Forest from road construction and timber harvest, commenters also expressed concerns about reconsideration of these protections. Comments varied, but generally included the following concerns:

- USDA Forest Service decisions favor corporations and industry.
- Any modifications that weaken restrictions appear to be driven by politics and industry pressure, not by science or public input.
- Southeast Alaska resident concerns, perspectives, and requests are not being given due consideration.

Commenters also noted that 2001 Roadless Rule regulations do not entirely prohibit road construction and timber harvest, referencing projects needed for Southeast Alaska economic growth and community stability that have been approved since implementation of the 2001 Roadless Rule.

Section 3 – Full Exemption From the 2001 Roadless Rule or Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule

The minority of comments received supported full exemption or modifying the 2001 Roadless Rule to create an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule. These supporting comments were generally based on the benefits of increasing access or reducing the negative impacts of geographic isolation, including these themes. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Remove 2001 Roadless Rule Application from Alaska
- Increased economic stability
- Utility access to remote areas
- Resource extraction
- Forest management
- Unique forest requires unique regulation

In addition to access, comments emphasized the Tongass National Forest’s unique physical and cultural landscape as a standalone reason for creating an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule.

Theme 1 – Remove 2001 Roadless Rule Application from Alaska

Commenters stated local regulations and policies currently in place, such as the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, provide sufficient environmental protection while allowing industrial development and economic progress. These commenters generally did not request an exemption, but stated that the 2001 Roadless Rule should not be applied in Alaska.

Theme 2 – Roads Required for Economic Stability

Comments in support of modifying the 2001 Roadless Rule point to impacts on Southeast Alaska communities resulting from implementation of the Rule across the Tongass National Forest. Ways in which commenters described the negative impacts of the 2001 Roadless Rule on Southeast Alaska’s economy include:

- Limiting ability of rural communities to supplement income due to limited access to hunting and fishing grounds.



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- Inhibiting development of renewable energy industries such as hydropower, wind power, and geothermal resources.
 - Limiting resource extraction opportunities, which decreases job opportunities.
 - Causing dependence on the tourism industry, which does not provide as much individual income as resource extraction employment.
 - Forcing resource extraction and logging operators to reduce employment opportunities by relocating operations outside Alaska.
 - Limiting access for tourism and commercial fishing projects.

Theme 3 – Community Isolation Increases Utility Rates

Commenters indicated the lack of road access has inhibited the ability of utility companies to expand to more remote locations. As a result, isolated communities have older utility systems or the cost of providing or servicing utilities that meet current standards is significantly higher than in areas with road access.

Theme 4 – 2001 Roadless Rule Negatively Impacts Resource Extraction Industry

Commenters in support of the economic benefits that resource extraction industries provide to Southeast Alaska indicate the 2001 Roadless Rule limits the viability of these industries, primarily through restricted access for the mining industry and restricted access and prohibitions on timber removal for the timber industry.

Theme 5 – Roads are Beneficial for Reasons Other than Industry

Commenters indicated access to the Tongass National Forest is required for environmental benefits including:

- Fire prevention management.
- Culling of over-ripe wood.
- Forest health management (i.e., removing deadfall from streams, addressing fungal problems).
- Access for tourists and those seeking outdoor recreation opportunities.

Theme 6 – Unique Forest Requires Unique Regulation

Whether in support of an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule or removal of applicability of the 2001 Roadless Rule to the Tongass National Forest, commenters often highlighted the uniqueness of Southeast Alaska as a standalone reason for modified regulation. Commenters indicate the one-size-fits-all-approach (i.e., 2001 Roadless Rule) is not an appropriate management alternative due to the unique physical, ecological, and socioeconomic nature of the Tongass National Forest; others believe the people of Alaska should be the deciding factor in balancing resource management and environmental protection.

Section 4 – Southeast Alaska Timber Industry

Commenters specifically responded to the section of the Notice of Intent that identified potential accommodations that could be made for timber harvesting. Responses generally opposed Tongass National Forest timber harvest increase. The most notable reasons for this opposition included the following themes. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Need for federal government and taxpayer subsidies.
- Timber industry as a minor economic contributor to Southeast Alaska's economy.
- Export of Tongass National Forest timber to overseas markets impacts local employment.



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- Timber industry decline impacted Southeast Alaska’s economy.

Theme 1 – Opposition to Subsidizing the Timber Industry

Commenters specifically referred to federal government subsidization of timber sales as a reason for opposing the effort to create an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule.

Theme 2 – Timber Industry Makes Limited Contributions to the Southeast Alaska Economy

In addition to opposing subsidized timber sales, commenters who discussed timber industry accommodations generally stated Tongass National Forest timber harvest is no longer economically viable or necessary. Many commenters provided recent and historical statistics on the costs and benefits of timber operations to demonstrate the industry does not support regional or local economies. Others highlighted industries, such as tourism, outdoor recreation, and commercial hunting and fishing, provide significantly more benefits to the economy than timber, to the extent that ceasing timber operations entirely would be likely to have negligible effects overall.

Theme 3 – Overseas Timber Exports Impact Employment

Commenters indicated the timber industry does not provide significant employment in Southeast Alaska. These commenters generally indicated harvesting timber from the Tongass National Forest to ship to overseas markets does not provide enough benefit to Alaska to balance the ecological cost of forest impacts.

Theme 4 – Timber Industry Decline Impacted Southeast Alaska’s Economy

Comments supporting accommodations for the timber industry referenced the overall potential benefit for Southeast Alaska’s economy. These comments generally stated decline in timber harvest since 2001 Roadless Rule implementation has been detrimental to Southeast Alaska in the following ways:

- Significant job loss.
- Population decline.
- Increase in criminal behavior.
- School enrollment decline.

Section 5 – Roadless Area Management Recommendations

Commenters provided input regarding management options to be considered or incorporated into an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule, including the following themes. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Alternatives related to timber harvest
- Protection for Tongass 77 watersheds, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Audubon Priority Conservation Areas, and the Chugach National Forest
- Focus on sustainable industries
- Forest Service focus in managing the Tongass National Forest
- Requests for specific locations to be designated and protected as roadless
- Road construction allowances under specific circumstances
- Use of existing regulations as a template for modifications



Theme 1 – Alternatives Related to Timber Harvest

Commenters acknowledged the historical role the timber industry has played in Southeast Alaska’s economy. These commenters also provided suggestions specifically tailored to support future Tongass National Forest timber management and Southeast Alaska communities. Examples of these suggestions include:

- Cease old-growth timber harvest and focus on young-growth.
- Assist small local mills in converting to processing second-growth growth timber.
- Restrict logging operations to those areas in which roads have already been constructed.
- Focus timber harvest on dead and diseased trees.
- Conduct thinning in clear-cut areas.
- Rotate logging operations in those areas that have already been logged, or access logging sites by helicopter rather than road, and do not log in new areas.
- Allow only timber harvest activities that have been thoroughly reviewed by all parties affected.

Theme 2 – Tongass 77 Watersheds, TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas, and Chugach National Forest Protection

Commenters specifically requested areas known as the Tongass 77 watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas remain protected under the 2001 Roadless Rule or receive increased protections. Most of these requests explained watersheds in these areas are vital to the Tongass National Forest ecosystem and the Southeast economy as they contain a substantial portion of Alaska’s salmon, char, and trout spawning and rearing habitat. Comments were also received specifically requesting the Chugach National Forest continue to be protected under the 2001 Roadless Rule.

Theme 3 – Focus on Sustainable Industries Rather than Resource Extraction

Commenters who opposed changes to the 2001 Roadless Rule either requested additional restrictions be placed on resource extraction (i.e., logging, mining) or requested all resource extraction activities on the Tongass National Forest be prohibited. General suggestions for any modifications to allow Tongass National Forest road construction focused on more sustainable industries including tourism, outdoor recreation, and commercial fishing and hunting. Several commenters also provided suggestions for the use of taxpayer funds on the Tongass National Forest, requesting tax revenue funds be invested in existing road maintenance, trail and recreation cabin maintenance, fire prevention, and watershed and habitat restoration.

Theme 4 – Forest Service Focus in Managing the Tongass National Forest

Although commenters generally focused on activities they would prefer be allowed or prohibited across the Tongass National Forest, several provided input suggesting adjustments to Forest Service land management practices. These suggestions were varied, but generally included the following themes. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Employ local loggers in watershed and habitat restoration efforts.
- Focus on proactive forest management.
- Develop primitive and semi-primitive recreation programs.
- Conduct watershed development and restoration.
- Restore fish and wildlife habitat.
- Conduct maintenance on existing road and trail systems.



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- Engage the community and be more collaborative in making decisions that affect the forest.
 - Invest in workforce development.
 - Invest in community education to minimize ecosystem impacts from all forms of forest-management activity.

Theme 5 – Location-Specific Requests

Commenters requested specific geographic areas remain protected under the 2001 Roadless Rule, or receive increased protection as a potential Alaska Roadless Area, citing several reasons including protection of watershed and habitat, aesthetics and outdoor recreation, and availability of fish and game for subsistence lifestyle maintenance. All lands identified in the 2003 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (for the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan revision) and nearly 200 specific geographic locations, spanning Southeast Alaska, were noted as needing additional protections.

Commenters also recommended several locations be removed from inventoried roadless areas with specific rationale related to connecting existing roads, developing hydroelectric projects, and to fully implement local and state government transportation plans.

Theme 6 – Conditional Activities

Comments related to activities on the Tongass National Forest generally focused on what should be allowed or prohibited. Some commenters provided additional suggestions for allowing activities under certain management conditions, including:

- Use of all-terrain vehicles for subsistence or recreation
- Development of hydroelectric power facilities under strict regulations focused on preservation of the ecosystem
- Logging operations that have undergone thorough community review, specifically for effects on salmon habitat
- Mining in areas that do not impact subsistence activities
- Infrastructure development assessed in relation to natural characteristics of existing landscape and ecosystem
- Projects that have undergone an elevated level of scrutiny, to include a cost-benefit analysis and/or conclusion that there would be no detriment to the Tongass National Forest ecosystem

Theme 7 – 2001 Roadless Rule Modification Based on Existing Regulations

Comments discussed regulations, policies, or practices currently in place for the management of roadless areas, both in the Tongass National Forest and nationwide. These comments requested that the Forest Service look to these regulations and policies — such as the Tongass Land Management Plan, state regulations in Colorado and Idaho, and the forest practices of the Menominee tribe — for guidance in developing roadless area regulations for the Tongass National Forest.

Section 6 – Additional Scoping Period Comments

Comments were received that discussed general viewpoints about an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule, the rulemaking project scoping process, National Environmental Policy Act-related analysis and information, and



other general input regarding the development of an Alaska-Specific Roadless Rule. Additional detail about each theme follows this list.

- Public process.
- Requests for specific analysis and information.

Theme 1 – Scoping Process Comments

Comments were received that expressed disappointment with the scoping process. Some of these comments reflected concern over the purpose and need for modifications to the 2001 Roadless Rule, and that the interests of the residents of Southeast Alaska and visitors to the Tongass National Forest receive appropriate consideration. Other comments spoke to the public comment process, specifically, and indicated displeasure there were not more public meetings or that the comment period was not of sufficient duration to allow full consideration. Comments related to the State of Alaska’s Citizen Advisory Committee were also received and reflected the view the committee had more industry representatives than members of the public – and a single Tribal member was designated to represent the interests of all Southeast Alaska Tribes.

Theme 2 – Requests for National Environmental Policy Act Analysis and Related Information

In response to the Notice of Intent’s discussion of issues that should be “analyzed in depth in the Draft EIS,” several comments requested that specific analyses be conducted or information be included in the environmental impact statement. Examples of these requests include the following:

- Impact on Alaska Native cultures and Tribal governments
- Biological assessments
- Fish and wildlife impacts
- Cost-benefit analysis of timber sales and road construction
- Information on taxpayer subsidies
- Cost of timber industry versus ecosystem service benefits
- Full disclosure of the economic value of the Southeast Alaska timber industry
- Increase in potential for fire risk
- Effect on local industries, especially commercial fishing and tourism
- Special use permit information and effects
- Effect on rural communities that rely on subsistence resources
- Assessment of State of Alaska’s Citizen Advisory Committee member appointments
- Effect of restoring roadless areas in which roads were previously constructed
- Impact to the Forest Service budget of implementation of the alternatives
- Net economic benefit to Southeast Alaska communities



DRAFT Timeline for Alaska Roadless EIS/Rulemaking (1-11-2019)

#	Task	Time-Start	Time-End	Who	Comments
1	Contractor selection	10/9/18	10/12/18	Acquisition team, Core IDT	Completed 10/11/18
2	Contract award		10/15/18	Acquisition team	Awarded 10/15/18
3	Timber meeting	10/15/18	10/16/18	Tongass NF, Core IDT	Meeting held 10/16/18
4	Public scoping period ends		10/15/18		
5	Hold pre-work meeting		10/25/18	Acquisition team, Core, IDT	Meeting held 10/25/18
6	Content analysis		10/31/18	Contractor	Completed 11/9/18
7	Submit regulatory workplan		11/1/18	Dept, WO, Core IDT	Submitted 11/28/18
8	Cooperating agency mtg-tribes initial		11/2/18		Meeting held 11/2/18
9	Develop proposed action		11/12/18	Core IDT	Completed 11/29/18
10	Cooperating agency review of alternatives		11/15/18	Coop Agencies, Core IDT	Meeting held 11/14; comments received 11/21-11/23
11	Issue analysis	11/1/18	11/23/18	Core IDT	Completed 11/29/18
12	R10 briefing of outstanding issues/alts		11/29/18	Core IDT/ R10	Meeting held 11/27/18
13	Outstanding issue/alt resolution		12/3/18	Dept, WO, Core IDT, Exec Steering Committee	Meeting held 12/3/18
14	Write draft Chap 1	11/1/18	11/15/18	Core IDT	Draft submitted 11/16/18
15	Write draft Chap 2	11/1/18	12/7/18	Core IDT	Draft submitted to contractor 12/7/18;
16	Analysis and DEIS development	12/7/18	2/12/19	Contractor	DEIS must be submitted to USFS by COB 2/12/19
17	Prepare RIA, RFA & CRIA	1/1/19	2/12/19	Economist; Core IDT	
18	IDT-Contractor on-site visit	1/14/19	1/18/19	Core IDT, Contractor	In Bothell, WA
19	Team Building	TBD	TBD	Core IDT	In Juneau, AK
20	Coop agency and internal review of DEIS	2/14/19	2/28/19	Coop Agencies, Core IDT	Hold coop agency meetings on 2/14 & 2/15/19
21	Consolidate DEIS comments	3/1/19	3/8/19	Core IDT	Must be submitted to contractor by COB 3/8/19
22	Print ready DEIS		3/15/19	Contractor	
23	Department identifies proposed rule and preferred alternative	3/18/19	3/22/19		
24	Adjust docs to reflect Dept decision	3/23/19	3/28/19		
25	Clearance	3/28/19	6/27/19	Dept, WO	3 month clearance process
26	Tribal consultation	4/15/19	6/3/19	Forests, Core IDT	
27	Publish/distribute DEIS/NOA/Proposed Rule	6/28/19	7/5/19	Core IDT	Target date for Federal Register publication 7/5/19
28	Public comment period (60 days)	7/5/19	9/3/19		60 day if sig rule; could be 45 days if non-sig rule
29	Public meetings/810 subsistence hearings	7/15/19	8/30/19	Forests, Core IDT	
30	Content analysis - DEIS	9/3/19	10/1/19	Contractor	
31	Issue analysis	10/1/19	10/14/19	Core IDT	
32	Resolution of outstanding issues	10/14/19	11/1/19	Dept, WO, Core IDT	
33	Response to comments	10/14/19	10/14/19	Contractor, Core IDT	
34	Update supporting documentation	10/14/19	1/3/20	Contractor, Core IDT	FEIS must be submitted to USFS no later than 1/3/20
35	Prepare & submit regulatory workplan	Jan 2020		Dept, WO, Core IDT	

#	Task	Time-Start	Time-End	Who	Comments
36	Update RIA, RFA, & CRIA				
37	Internal and coop agency review of FEIS	1/3/20	1/17/20	Coop Agencies; Core IDT	
38	Consolidate comments	1/18/20	1/24/20	Core IDT	Must be submitted to contractor no later than 1/24/20
39	Print ready FEIS		2/7/20	Contractor	
40	Clearance of FEIS/Final Rule	2/10/20	4/10/20	Dept, WO	3 month clearance process
41	Sec 7 consultation	2/10/20	4/10/20	Core IDT	
42	Tribal consultation	3/9/20	4/10/20	Forests, Core IDT	
43	Publish Distribute FEIS/NOA	Apr 2020	Apr 2020	Core IDT	
44	30 day stay of decision		May 2020		Mandatory
	Publication of Final Rule		Jun 2020	Core IDT	



File Code: 1560; 1300
Date: September 28, 2018

Joel Jackson
President
Organized Village of Kake
P.O. Box 316
Kake, AK 99830

Dear President Jackson,

Thank you for your letter dated September 7, 2018 regarding your concerns about the regulatory proposal for developing an Alaska specific roadless rule. You raised several issues that I will begin to address with this letter and look forward to further dialogue through meaningful government-to-government consultation.

On July 30, 2018, Interim Regional Forester David Schmid sent a letter to the Organized Village of Kake inviting government-to-government consultation and cooperating agency status regarding a regulatory proposal originated by the State of Alaska and agreed to by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop a state-specific roadless rule. The intent of the letter was to offer pre-notification to Federally Recognized Tribes about the proposal before it was made public in the *Federal Register's* Notice of Intent published on August 30, 2018. The letter inviting consultation and the Notice of Intent for a 45-day public comment period initiated a two-year planning process that will inform a final decision by the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee anticipated by June 2020. The agency's efforts to invite consultation 30-days prior to the Notice of Intent public comment period and commitment to continuously engage leads me to believe we are in compliance with our requirements for government-to-government consultation. No decisions have been made on an Alaska roadless rule.

The USDA Forest Service and State of Alaska signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) cooperating agency agreement on August 2, 2018 that outlines how the two entities will work together to develop a state-specific roadless rule. The MOU states that the State will form a collaborative group that will inform their input into the rulemaking process that is being led by the USDA Forest Service. Alaska Governor Bill Walker signed an Administrative Order on September 6, 2018 that establishes their roadless rulemaking advisory committee. The process to convene and manage the State's advisory committee is solely at the discretion of the State of Alaska. The USDA Forest Service has no authority in the State's process related to the advisory committee. Any further questions or concerns regarding the State's advisory committee should be directed to Chris Maisch, Alaska State Forester, at Chris.Maisch@alaska.gov or 907-451-2660.

In the aforementioned letter dated July 30, 2018, the Organized Village of Kake was invited to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking project as a cooperating agency. I have included in this letter an information sheet that describes the roles of a cooperating agency. Accepting



cooperating agency status does not forego government-to-government consultation; it is in addition to our requirements for consultation.

Two other states, Idaho and Colorado, have developed state-specific roadless rules that better reflect local needs that could not be addressed in the national roadless rule. Those rules included provisions that allowed for less restrictions than the national roadless rule in some areas, and more strict measures in others. The purpose of developing an Alaska roadless rule is to consider whether a state-specific roadless rule will meet the social, economic, and natural resource needs of Alaskans better than the national roadless rule's "one size fits all" approach. Broad participation from Tribal governments will be a key to its success.

The intent of this state-specific roadless rulemaking process is keep it separate from any process to amend or revise the 2016 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). I highly value the commitment of the public's time and energy in developing the 2016 amendment to the Forest Plan that focused on transitioning the timber program from primarily harvesting old-growth trees to young-growth trees and renewable energy. An Alaska roadless rule could affect many interests other than commercial timber such as mining, energy development, forest restoration, and tourism. It remains unknown whether an Alaska roadless rule will necessitate an amendment or revision to the 2016 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

The accelerated pace of this rulemaking effort is seeking to respond to a broader national public interest for improving efficiencies and reducing timelines in our planning processes. I believe the two-year timeline for considering an Alaska roadless rule will adequately meet the need and I am committed to continuous and meaningful public and Tribal engagement throughout the process. Your request to extend the public scoping comment period that closes on October 15, 2018 to December 3, 2018 has been considered and denied.

In addition to the current public scoping period, the rulemaking effort provides several additional ways for the Organized Village of Kake to provide their input into the process. First, at any time I will continue to honor our commitment to accept information for the rulemaking effort through regular government-to-government consultation. Second, I welcome you to further participate as a cooperating agency. And finally, there will be another public comment period when the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is complete, anticipated during summer 2019.

I sincerely appreciate your engagement on this important regulatory rulemaking process. Melinda Hernandez-Burke, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Specialist, will seek to schedule a government-to-government consultation with the Organized Village of Kake. If you have further questions about this process, please contact Melinda at 907-586-7089 or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,



M. EARL STEWART
Forest Supervisor, Tongass NF



File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 9 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Charles Totemoff
President and Director, CEO
Chenega Corporation
3000 C Street, Suite 301
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Totemoff:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date: **AUG - 9 2018** RECORD COPY

Ms. Eydie Baller, President
Chickaloon-Moose Creek Native Association
P.O. Box 875046
Wasilla, AK 99687

Dear Ms. Baller:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region

P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628

File Code: 1950
Date: AUG - 9 2018 RECORD COPY

Ms. Sheri Buretta
Chairman of the Board
Chugach Alaska Corporation
800 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 1200
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Ms. Buretta:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 9 2018

RECORD COPY

Ms. Sophie Minich
President/CEO
Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)
725 E. Fireweek Ln. #800
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Ms. Minich:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 9 2018 RECORD COPY

Mr. Curtis J. McQueen, CEO
Eklutna Incorporated
16515 Centerfield Drive, Suite 201
Eagle River, AK 99577

Dear Mr. McQueen:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950
Date:

RECORD COPY

AUG - 9 2018

Mr. Don Emmal, Chairman
English Bay Corporation
237 E. Fireweed Ln. St. 200
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Emmal:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 9 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. John Sheperd, CEO
Port Graham Corporation
431 7th Avenue, Ste. 103
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Sheperd:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 9 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Roy Totemoff, President
Tatitlek Corporation
561 E. 36th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Totemoff:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Cape Fox Corporation
Lands Manager
Mr. Albert White
P.O. Box 8558
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mr. White:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting Alaska Native corporation consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your Native corporation interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with Alaska Native corporations, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Alaska Native corporation input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre



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The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Goldbelt, Incorporated
Lands Manager
Ms. Judy Mason
3025 Clinton Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Mason:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Haida Corporation
Chairman
Mr. Alvin Edenshaw
P.O. Box 89
Hydaburg, AK 99922

Dear Mr. Edenshaw:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Huna Totem Corporation
President/CEO
Mr. Russell Dick
9301 Glacier Highway, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Dick:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Kake Tribal Corporation
President
Mr. Robert D. Mills
P.O. Box 263
Kake, AK 99830

Dear Mr. Mills:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Kavilco Inc.
President
Mr. Louis L. Jones
1000 2nd Ave, St 3320
Seattle, WA 98104-4078

Dear Mr. Jones:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Klawock Heenya Corporation
President
Ms. Theresa Fairbanks
P.O. Box 129
Klawock, AK 99925

Dear Ms. Fairbanks:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Klukwan Inc.
President
Ms. Rosemarie Hotch
PMB 160 2440 E. Tudor
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Ms. Hotch:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Kootznoowoo Inc.
Chairperson
Ms. Melissa Kookesh
8585 Old Dairy Road, Suite 104
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Kookesh:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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I value transparency with Alaska Native corporations, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Alaska Native corporation input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

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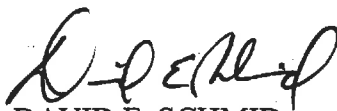
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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Sealaska Corporation
President/CEO
Mr. Anthony Mallott
One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 400
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Mallott:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Shaan-Seet Inc.
President
Mr. Ed Douville
P.O. Box 690
Craig, AK 99921

Dear Mr. Douville:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Shee Atika Incorporated
President
Dr. Kenneth Cameron
315 Lincoln Street, Suite 300
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Dr. Cameron:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Yak-Tat Kwaan, Inc.
President
Ms. Shari Jensen
P.O. Box 416
Yakutat, AK 99689

Dear Ms. Jensen:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chugach Alaska Corporation
Chairman of the Board
Ms. Sheri Buretta
3800 Centerpoint Drive, Ste. 1200
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Ms. Buretta:

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File Code: 1560

Date: June 10, 2019

Chenega Corporation
President and Director, CEO
Mr. Charles Totemoff
3000 C Street, Suite 301
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Totemoff:

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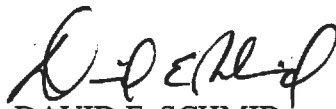
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DAVID E. SCHMID
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File Code: 1560

Date: June 10, 2019

English Bay Corporation
Manager
Mr. Steve Vogler
237 E. Fireweed Ln. St. 200
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Vogler:

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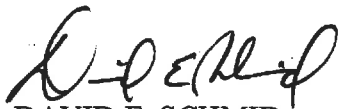
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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Eyak Corporation
President
Ms. Nancy Barnes
P.O. Box 340
Cordova, AK 99574

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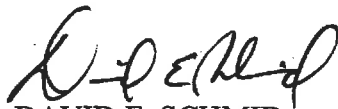
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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Port Graham Corporation
CEO
Mr. John Sheperd
431 7th Avenue, Ste. 108
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Sheperd:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Tatitlek Corporation
President
Mr. Roy Totemoff
561 E. 36th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Mr. Totemoff:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)
President/ CEO
Ms. Sophie Minich
725 E. Fireweed Ln. #800
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Ms. Minich:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chickaloon-Moose Creek
Native Association
President
Ms. Eydie Baller
P.O. Box A75046
Wasilla, AK 99687

Dear Ms. Baller:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Eklutna Incorporated
CEO
Mr. Curtis J. McQueen
16515 Centerfield Drive, Suite 201
Eagle River, AK 99577

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Knikatnu Incorporated
President
Mr. Raymond Theodore
P.O. Box 872130
Wasilla, AK 99687

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Ninilchik Native Association, Inc.
President, CEO
Mr. Loren Prosser
15730 Sterling Hwy, PO Box 39130
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear Mr. Prosser:

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Salamatof Native Association, Inc.
President
Mr. Christopher Manfor
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Mr. Manfor:

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Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Mr. Manfor:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting Alaska Native corporation consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your Native corporation interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with Alaska Native corporations, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Alaska Native corporation input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre



Tongass National Forest contains approximately 9.2 million acres of inventoried Roadless areas. In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Seldovia Native Association
CEO
Mr. Don Kashevaroff
P.O. Box A
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear Mr. Kashevaroff:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting Alaska Native corporation consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your Native corporation interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with Alaska Native corporations, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Alaska Native corporation input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre



Tongass National Forest contains approximately 9.2 million acres of inventoried Roadless areas. In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Tyonek Native Corporation
President
Mrs. Michaelene Stephan
1689 C Street, Suite 219
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mrs. Stephan:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting Alaska Native corporation consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your Native corporation interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with Alaska Native corporations, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Alaska Native corporation input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre



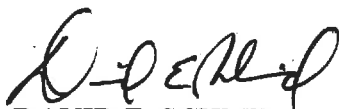
Tongass National Forest contains approximately 9.2 million acres of inventoried Roadless areas. In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casuluçan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (ALTERNATIVE 3)

§294.52 Alaska Roadless Areas

(a) Designations. All National Forest System lands within the Tongass National Forest listed in § 294.57 are hereby designated as Alaska Roadless Areas. Alaska Roadless Areas established by this subpart shall constitute the exclusive set of National Forest System lands within the State of Alaska to which the provisions of this subpart shall apply.

(b) Priority land management categories. Alaska Roadless Areas are subdivided into three categories: Roadless Priority, Community Priority, and Watershed Priority.

§294.53 Road construction and reconstruction in Alaska Roadless Areas.

(a) A road may not be constructed or reconstructed in Alaska Roadless Areas, except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.

(b) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

- (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
- (2) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of essential public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;
- (3) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);
- (4) A road is needed for one of the following reasons and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the Alaska Roadless Area is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative:
 - (i) a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, that the Secretary of Agriculture determines is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired; or
 - (ii) transportation needs identified by the State of Alaska's Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan that are needed for the connection of communities and development of the regional transportation system;
- (5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
- (6) A road is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration or to provide administrative access to a designated experimental forest;
- (7) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if deemed essential for authorized public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
- (8) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;
- (9) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system such as



municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(10) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or

(11) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road.

(c) **Community Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Community Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty, and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the AKRA area is environmentally preferable and site-specific measures can be designed to minimize effects on water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity;

(2) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);

(3) A road is needed for micro sales, salvage sales, and small commercial sales less than one million board feet of timber;

(4) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and that cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;

(5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;

(6) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;

(7) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;

(8) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road;

(9) The Secretary of Agriculture determines that a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired and no other reasonable alternative exists;

(10) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(11) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or

(12) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a developed recreation site.

(d) **Watershed Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Watershed Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:



- (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty. To the maximum extent permissible under such authorities, roads authorized pursuant to this provision will be limited to situations where no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the AKRA area is environmentally preferable and site-specific measures are designed to minimize effects on water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity;
- (2) The Secretary of Agriculture determines that a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired and no other reasonable alternative exists;
- (3) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
- (4) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and that cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
- (5) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road; or
- (6) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property.

§294.54 Timber harvest in Alaska Roadless Areas.

(a) Timber harvest is prohibited in Alaska Roadless Areas except as provided in paragraph (b), (c) and (d) of this section. Additionally, except as provided in paragraph (c), commercial old-growth timber harvest is prohibited on National Forest System lands as depicted in a map maintained by Chief's Office that identifies high priority watersheds that largely coincide with Alaska Roadless Areas, but extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.

(b) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

- (1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
- (2) Timber harvest is needed for mineral exploration and mine development, subject to existing laws and regulations;
- (3) Timber harvest is needed for the cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;
- (4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:
 - (i) To maintain, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or
 - (ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure, and processes;
- (5) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;
- (6) Timber harvest is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration;

(7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(8) Timber harvest is needed for public health and safety, including removal of hazard trees; or

(9) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including the construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.

(c) **Watershed Priority.** Timber harvest may occur if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;

(2) The cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses, that does not degrade water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic diversity, or soil productivity;

(3) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:

(i) To maintain, restore or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or

(ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure;

(4) Timber harvest is incidental to trail or recreation development that does not degrade water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity; or

(5) Timber harvest is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property.

(d) **Community Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Area designated as Community Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;

(2) The cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees is for the purpose of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;

(3) Timber harvest is undertaken as a micro sale, salvage sale, or small commercial sale less than one million board feet of timber;

(4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:

(i) To maintain, restore or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or

(ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure;

(5) Timber harvest is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;

(6) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;

(7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines; or



(8) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including trail or recreation development; and the construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.

§294.55 Corrections and modifications.

Administrative correction or modification of designations made pursuant to this subpart may be made as follows:

- (a) Administrative corrections to boundaries. The Regional Forester for the Alaska Region may issue administrative corrections to the boundaries of an Alaska Roadless Area and/or high priority watersheds after a 30-day public notice and opportunity to comment period. Administrative corrections are limited to adjustments that remedy clerical errors, typographical errors, mapping errors, improvements in mapping technology, conformance to statutory or regulatory changes, or incorporation of changes due to land exchanges.
- (b) Administrative modifications to Classifications and Boundaries. The Regional Forester for the Alaska Region may issue modifications to the classifications and boundaries of an Alaska Roadless Area and/or high priority watersheds after a 45-day public notice and opportunity to comment period.
- (c) The procedures set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection shall also apply to any correction or modification of an inventoried roadless area boundaries within the Chugach National Forest as established pursuant to 66 FR 3244 (Jan. 12, 2001).

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (ALTERNATIVE 4)

§294.52 Alaska Roadless Areas

- (a) Designations. All National Forest System lands within the Tongass National Forest listed in § 294.57 are hereby designated as Alaska Roadless Areas. Alaska Roadless Areas established by this subpart shall constitute the exclusive set of National Forest System lands within the State of Alaska to which the provisions of this subpart shall apply.
- (b) Priority land management categories. Alaska Roadless Areas are subdivided into three categories: LUD II Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority.

§294.53 Road construction and reconstruction in Alaska Roadless Areas.

- (a) A road may not be constructed or reconstructed in Alaska Roadless Areas, except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.
- (b) LUD II Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as LUD II Priority if the Responsible Official determines that the road construction or reconstruction is consistent with the legislated management restrictions established in Section 201 of the Tongass Timber Reform Act or a road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty.
- (c) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:
 - (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
 - (2) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of essential public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;



- (3) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);
 - (4) A road is needed for one of the following reasons and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the Alaska Roadless Area is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative:
 - (i) a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, that the Secretary of Agriculture determines is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired; or
 - (ii) transportation needs identified by the State of Alaska's Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan that are needed for the connection of communities and development of the regional transportation system;
 - (5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
 - (6) A road is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration, or to provide administrative access to a designated experimental forest;
 - (7) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for authorized public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
 - (8) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;
 - (9) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;
 - (10) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or
 - (11) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road.
- (d) Timber Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, permanent or temporary roads may be constructed, reconstructed, or maintained within the Timber Priority Alaska Roadless Areas.

§294.54 Timber harvest in Alaska Roadless Areas.

- (a) Timber harvest is prohibited in Alaska Roadless Areas except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.
- (b) LUD II Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Areas designated as LUD II Priority if the Responsible Official determines that timber harvest is consistent with the legislated management restrictions established in Section 201 of the Tongass Timber Reform Act or timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty.
- (c) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Areas designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:



- (1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
 - (2) Timber harvest is needed for mineral exploration and mine development, subject to existing laws and regulations;
 - (3) Timber harvest is needed for the cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;
 - (4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:
 - (i) To maintain, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or
 - (ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure, and processes;
 - (5) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;
 - (6) Timber harvest is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration;
 - (7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;
 - (8) Timber harvest is needed for public health and safety, including removal of hazard trees; or
 - (9) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.
- (d) Timber Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber may be cut, sold, or removed in lands designated Timber Priority Alaska Roadless Areas.

§294.55 Corrections and modifications.

Same language as ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (Alternative 3).

Chapter 1

Purpose of and Need for Action

The Forest Service has prepared this draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal laws and regulations. This DEIS discloses the potential environmental consequences that may result from the alternatives considered for the proposed Alaska Roadless Rules.

Additional documentation that describes DEIS development, the analyses of the effects of the alternatives considered on forest resources, public involvement, and other relevant documents may be found within the record located at the Forest Service's Alaska Region Office, in the Juneau Federal Building at 709 W. 9th Street, Juneau, Alaska.

Background

The Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule) was promulgated in January 2001 at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 294 (36 CFR 294), Subpart B (66 Federal Register [FR] 3244). Currently, about 9.2 million acres (55 percent) of the Tongass are managed as "inventoried roadless areas" (IRAs).⁵ Maps of IRAs, for the Tongass National Forest, are available online [here](#).⁶ IRAs contain generally undeveloped areas that are typically 5,000 acres or greater in size. The 2001 Roadless Rule applies nationwide (except Idaho and Colorado), and currently provides management direction for IRAs on 44.7 million acres of National Forests (approximately 24 percent of total National Forest System [NFS] lands) by prohibiting road construction and reconstruction and timber cutting, sale, or removal in those IRAs, with certain exceptions.

Since its promulgation, the 2001 Roadless Rule has been the subject of litigation. In 2001, the State of Alaska filed a complaint, challenging the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) promulgation of the 2001 Roadless Rule and its application in Alaska. The USDA and the State of Alaska reached a settlement in 2003, and the USDA subsequently issued a rule temporarily exempting the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule. In 2011, a federal court (District of Alaska) set aside the Tongass National Forest's exemption and reinstated the 2001 Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest (with special instructions). The Alaska District Court's ruling was initially reversed by a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit, but the District Court's ruling was ultimately upheld in a 6–5 en banc ruling of the Ninth Circuit in 2015. Consequently, the 2001 Roadless Rule remains in effect in Alaska and the Forest Service continues to apply the 2001 National Rule to the Tongass and Chugach National Forests.

In January 2018, the State of Alaska submitted a petition (Appendix A) requesting that the Secretary of Agriculture consider exempting the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule, pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and the USDA's petition procedures in 7 CFR 1.28. In June 2018, the Secretary of Agriculture directed the Forest Service to begin working to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule. In August 2018, the Forest Service granted cooperating agency status to the State of Alaska. The Forest Service and the State of Alaska believe that the proposed action represents a unique opportunity to collaboratively resolve and provide certainty to the roadless issue in the State of Alaska. The Forest Service published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) and initiate a public rulemaking process to address the management of IRAs on the Tongass National Forest on August 30, 2018 (83 FR 44252). As stated in that NOI, the USDA proposes to develop a durable and long-lasting regulation for the conservation and management of roadless areas

⁵ The original acreage of IRAs on the Tongass was approximately 9.34 million acres. As a result of ownership changes and boundary alignment corrections, including shoreline mapping adjustments, the current acreage is 9.20 million acres.

⁶ https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/roadless/2001roadlessrule/maps/statemaps/?cid=fsm8_037699

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on the Tongass National Forest. The state-specific roadless rule would establish a land classification system designed to conserve roadless area characteristics on the Tongass National Forest while accommodating timber harvest and road construction/reconstruction activities that are determined to be needed for forest management, economic development opportunities, and the exercise of valid existing rights or other non-discretionary legal authorities.

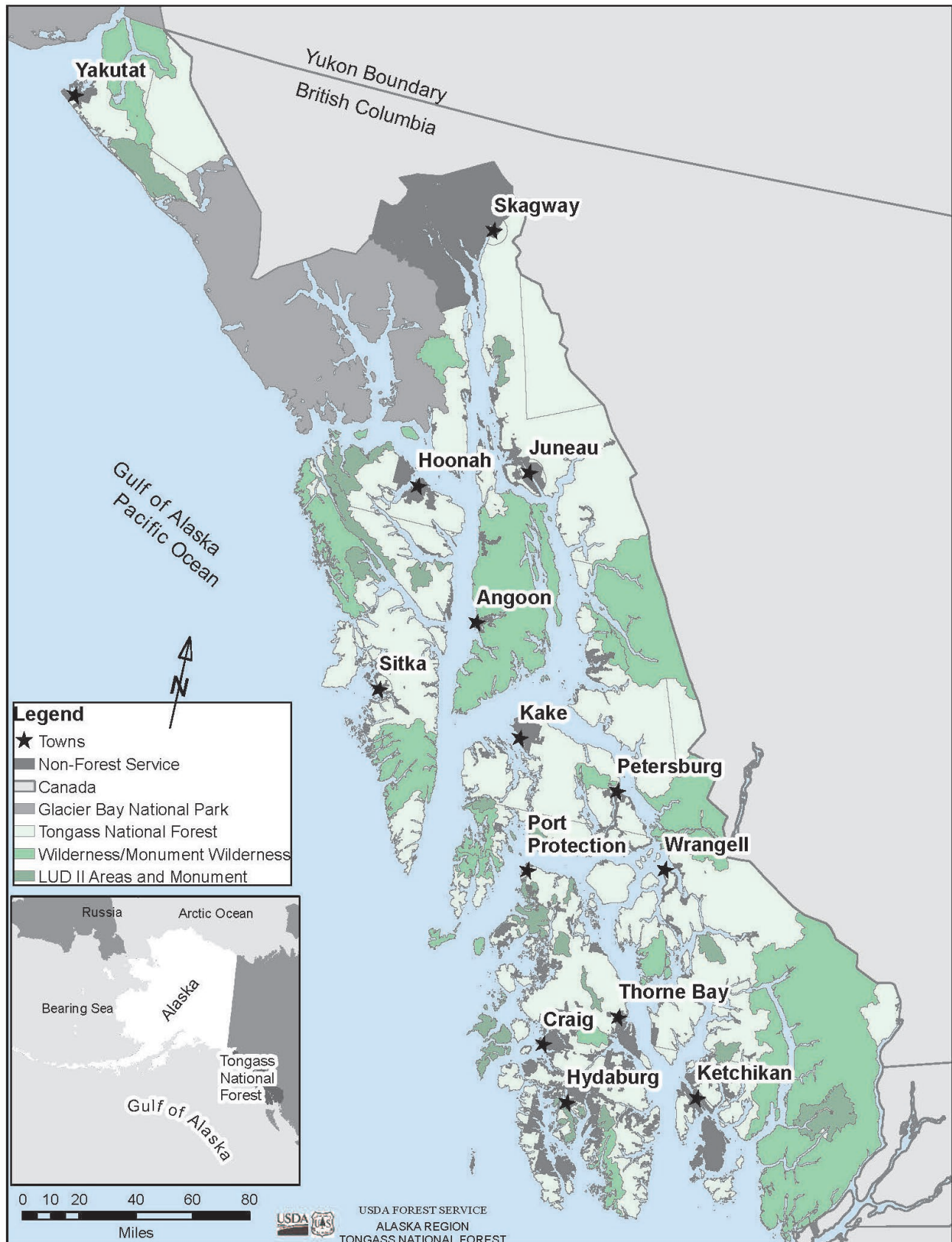
The proposed rule would not authorize any ground-disturbing activities, but rather it describes exceptions under which certain activities might be allowed within Alaska roadless areas. Before authorizing a land-use activity in roadless areas, the Forest Service must complete a site-specific environmental analysis, pursuant to the NEPA and its implementing regulations. When a specific project or activity is proposed on NFS land, the Forest Service conducts site-specific analyses of the effects associated with that project or activity and makes a decision that authorizes implementation of that project or activity.

Analysis Area

The 16.7-million-acre Tongass National Forest (hereafter Tongass or Forest) comprises approximately 7 percent of Alaska and 80 percent of percent of Southeast Alaska – Alaska's southeastern panhandle extending from the Dixon Entrance in the south to Yakutat Bay in the north, and bordered on the east by Canada and on the west by the Gulf of Alaska. The Tongass extends approximately 500 miles north to south, and approximately 120 miles east to west at its widest point. Figure 1-1 is a vicinity map of the Forest.

The Tongass includes a narrow mainland strip of steep, rugged mountains, and icefields and more than 1,000 offshore islands known as the Alexander Archipelago. Together, the islands and mainland have nearly 11,000 miles of meandering shoreline, with numerous bays and coves. A system of seaways separates the many islands and provides a protected waterway called the Inside Passage. Federal government public lands comprise approximately 95 percent of Southeast Alaska, with about 80 percent in the Tongass and the majority of the remaining lands in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. The remaining land is held by the State government, Alaska Native corporations, and other private ownerships. Most of the area of the Tongass is undeveloped. Approximately 73,000 people inhabit Southeast Alaska, primarily in 32 communities plus 2 seasonal communities located on islands or mainland coastal areas. Eight of the communities have populations greater than 1,000 persons. Most of these communities are surrounded by, or adjacent to, NFS land. Three communities are connected to other parts of the mainland by road: Haines and Skagway in the north and Hyder in the south.

Figure 1-1
Tongass National Forest Vicinity Map



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Purpose and Need

In response to the State of Alaska's petition for rulemaking, the Forest Service and State of Alaska agree the controversy surrounding the management of Tongass roadless areas may be resolved through state-specific rulemaking. A long-term, durable approach to roadless area management is desired that accommodates the unique biological, social, and economic situation found in and around the Tongass. The Tongass is unique from other national forests with respect to size, percentage of IRAs, amount of NFS lands and subsequent dependency of 32 communities on federal lands, and unique Alaska and Tongass-specific statutory considerations (e.g., Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act [ANILCA]), Tongass Timber Reform Act [TTRA]).

The USDA and Forest Service believe the 2001 Roadless Rule prohibitions on timber harvest and road construction/reconstruction can be adjusted for the Tongass in a manner that meaningfully addresses local economic and development concerns while balancing roadless area conservation needs.

Proposed Action

The USDA proposes to develop a durable and long-lasting regulation for the conservation and management of roadless areas in Alaska on the Tongass. The State-specific roadless rule would establish a land classification system designed to conserve roadless area characteristics on the Tongass while affording limited opportunities for timber harvests and road construction/reconstruction activities that are determined to assist in providing forest management, economic development opportunities, and the exercise of valid existing rights or other non-discretionary legal authorities.

Decision Framework

This DEIS will inform the USDA Secretary or Undersecretary of Agriculture, in deciding whether to promulgate an Alaska state-specific rule as proposed, one of the other alternatives, or a combination of the alternatives as analyzed by the DEIS. Promulgation of a rule involves establishing regulations, which would be issued under 36 CFR Part 294, Subpart E.

Public Participation

The Forest Service published an NOI to prepare an EIS for the Alaska Roadless Rule in the FR on August 30, 2018. The NOI initiated a 45-day scoping period which ended on October 15, 2018. During this time period, the Forest Service conducted 17 public meetings including meetings in Anchorage, Alaska; Washington, DC; and communities throughout Southeast Alaska – Angoon, Craig, Gustavus, Hoonah, Kake, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Point Baker, Sitka, Tenakee Springs, Thome Bay, Wrangell, Yakutat, and two meetings in Juneau. During the public comment scoping period following the Aug. 30, 2018 publication of the Notice of Intent of Proposed Rulemaking in the FR (83 FR 44252) which ended Oct. 15, 2018, just over 144,000 entries were logged.

Tribal and Native Corporation Participation

On July 30, 2018, the Forest Service sent letters to 32 federally-recognized tribes and 27 Alaska Native corporations, within Southeast and Southcentral Alaska, initiating government-to-government and government-to-corporation consultation on the Alaska Roadless Rule.

Cooperating Agencies

The following are cooperating agencies for the Alaska Rulemaking process:

- Angoon Community Association;
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska;
- Hoonah Indian Association;
- Hydaburg Community Association;
- Organized Village of Kake;

- Organized Village of Kasaan; and
- State of Alaska.

On July 30, 2018, the Forest Service invited 19 Southeast Alaska federally-recognized tribes to participate as cooperating agencies during the rulemaking process. Six tribes agreed to become cooperating agencies and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The tribes were invited to be cooperating agencies due to their specialized knowledge and expertise of land management, subsistence, natural resources, and potential impacts to specific communities within Alaska.

The State of Alaska requested cooperating agency status for the Alaska rulemaking process on June 19, 2018 and entered into an MOU on August 2, 2018. The State of Alaska is the petitioner for the rulemaking process and has special knowledge and expertise relative to natural resources, economic growth and development, resource planning, transportation, and other matters which may be affected by Forest Service management.

The State of Alaska's input as a cooperating agency was informed by the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizens Advisory Committee (the Committee). In September 2018, Governor Walker issued Administrative Order 299 to establish the Committee, which was charged with providing recommendations to assist the State in fulfilling its role as a cooperating agency. Thirteen Committee members were selected by Governor Walker to represent a diversity of perspectives, including Alaska Native corporations and tribes, fishing, timber, conservation, tourism, utilities, mining, transportation, local government, and the Alaska Division of Forestry. A Forest Service representative served in an ex officio capacity to provide technical expertise for the Committee's deliberations. The Committee met for three in-person meetings in the fall of 2018 (October 2-3 in Juneau; October 24-26 in Ketchikan; and November 6-8 in Sitka). Meetings were open to the public, and each meeting included an opportunity for public comment. A final report was produced with options for the State of Alaska to consider and was provided as part of their Cooperating Agency comments to the Forest Service.

Key Issues

The regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.2) require federal agencies to develop and evaluate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal that involves unresolved conflict concerning alternative uses of available resources. Public involvement was used to identify points of disagreement about the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, and to identify key issues to use as a basis for developing and evaluating alternatives. The following three key issues were identified for the Alaska state-specific roadless rulemaking effort and will be carried forward throughout the analysis.

Key Issue 1 – Conserve roadless area characteristics

The Tongass includes large undeveloped areas, with several portions of the Forest consisting of contiguous roadless areas that exceed 1 million acres and represent large blocks of unfragmented wildlife habitats, undeveloped or natural areas, and opportunities for primitive recreation and/or solitude. This large scale of roadless areas, including wildernesses and national monuments, does not exist anywhere else in the NFS outside of Alaska. The Tongass is the largest national forest in the United States and the majority of the Tongass is in a natural condition, unlike most other national forests. It represents one of the largest, relatively intact temperate rainforests in the world.

Roadless areas are important because of their wildlife and fish habitat, recreation values, importance to multiple economic sectors, inherent passive use values, traditional properties and sacred sites for local indigenous people, and ecosystem services values they provide. Passive use values represent the value that individuals assign to a resource independent of their use of that resource and typically include existence, option, and bequest values. These values represent the value that individuals obtain from knowing that expansive roadless areas exist, knowing that they are available to visit in the future should they choose to do so, and knowing that they are available for future generations to inherit.

Ecosystem services represent the services provided to society by healthy ecosystems. These services and benefits include what some consider to be long-term life support benefits to society as a whole. Examples of ecosystem services include watershed services, soil stabilization and erosion control, improved air quality, climate regulation, carbon sequestration, and biological diversity.

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The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Qualitative degree of impacts to roadless area characteristics;
- Total acres of roadless areas by alternative and by Alaska Roadless Area (AKRA) category;
- Acres of roadless area removed and added; and
- Acres of roadless area in development LUDs.

Key Issue 2 – Support local and regional socioeconomic well-being, Alaska Native culture, rural subsistence lifestyles, and economic opportunity across multiple economic sectors

The Tongass comprises approximately 80 percent of Southeast Alaska and therefore plays a critical role in supporting local and regional economy, promoting economic diversification, and also enhancing rural community well-being. The visitor industry, seafood industry, and resource extraction industries contribute to local jobs and income alongside public sector employment spanning federal, state, and local government. While the visitor and seafood industries are the largest private-sector employers across Southeast Alaska, resource extraction remains important in some rural communities where jobs are limited and unemployment is oftentimes high.

The Forest Service manages land for the multiple-use and sustained yield of all renewable resources. There is fragmentation and disagreement among the public regarding the best management of federal lands for economic development purposes and to support the overall economic vitality of Tongass communities. Many believe the visitor industry and seafood industries have become the mainstay of Southeast Alaska's economy and therefore should have prominence in Forest Service land management decision-making. Others note that resource extraction, including forest products and the minerals industry, continue to provide jobs and income sources in remote and isolated Southeast communities. Furthermore, Southeast Alaska residents, communities, and Alaska Native individuals and tribes provide consistent reminders of Tongass value for subsistence uses, recreational hunting and fishing, and independent travelers and outdoor enthusiasts – and that these activities yield economic value as well.

The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Qualitative degree of effect to forest products industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to visitor industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to fisheries industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to locatable and leasable minerals development potential;
- Qualitative degree of effect to energy project development potential;
- Qualitative degree of effect to major transportation projects;
- Acres of forest land suitable for timber production (old growth and young growth);
- Acres of increase in suitable old growth by substantially altered areas, logical extensions of roaded areas, and areas more distant from roads;
- Acres of increase in high-volume suitable old growth by substantially altered areas, logical extensions of roaded areas, and areas more distant from roads;
- Qualitative degree of support for Alaska Native culture due to improved access to tree harvest for cultural purposes;
- Qualitative degree of support for subsistence lifestyles; and
- Qualitative degree of effects to communities – overall level of potential change for communities.

Key Issue 3 – Conserve terrestrial habitat, aquatic habitat, and biological diversity

The Tongass includes large, undeveloped, and natural land areas that represent expansive unfragmented blocks of wildlife habitat. This scale and size of contiguous habitat is not available elsewhere in the NFS outside of Alaska. Although wildlife species on the Tongass are associated with more than one habitat type, many inhabit old-growth forests or prey on species that inhabit old-growth forests. The Old-growth Habitat Conservation Strategy was developed to maintain the integrity of the old-growth forest ecosystem, and thereby conserve biological diversity across the Forest by retaining intact, largely undisturbed habitat. In addition, because of its predominantly undeveloped nature, a number of wide-ranging species find optimal habitat in the more remote areas of the Forest.

Fish and the aquatic resources on the Tongass support subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries, as well as traditional and cultural values. The Tongass includes high-value, intact watersheds that were designated to be managed for intact ecological values and aquatic habitat productivity, and many commenters believe these areas should be protected so that they can continue to provide the clean water and fish habitats that are essential to the ecological and economic health of the Southeast Alaska communities and residents who rely on them.

The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Percent of existing and original productive old growth (POG) harvested over the long term;
- Percent of original high-volume POG harvested over the long term;
- Percent of original large-tree POG harvested over the long term;
- Acres of young-growth harvest in sensitive areas;
- Average road density over the long term;
- Percent of Wildlife Analysis Areas (WAAs) with road density <0.7 miles/square mile; and
- Qualitative ratings of species-specific effects.

DRAFT Alaska Roadless Area Characteristics

Roadless area characteristics, as established by the 2001 Roadless Rule, are resources or features that are often present in and characterize inventoried roadless areas. These characteristics are utilized by the Forest Service in evaluating roadless area project proposals.

The State of Alaska's advisory committee provided the Governor with its own Alaska-specific perspective of roadless area characteristics by further elaborating on the unique social and cultural context, rich habitat, scenic quality, and economic importance of Alaska roadless areas. The State Advisory Committee's elaboration of the unique social and cultural context, rich habitat, scenic quality, and economic importance of Alaska roadless areas provides important context for considering local perspective for this rulemaking. The Department appreciates the thoughtful process undertaken by the State's Advisory Committee and is proposing a new definition after consideration of the State's input and the Forest Service's own reflection of roadless characteristics.



Characteristic	Description
Physical Environment	Roadless areas provide high-quality or undisturbed soil, water, and air.
Water	Roadless areas provide a variety of water resources including public drinking water sources, fish and aquatic resources, and hatchery aquatic resources.
Diversity	Roadless areas support a diversity of plant and animal communities including stands of old-growth forests.
Habitat	Roadless areas are expansive areas where high-quality intact habitat exists and ecosystems function with all their native species and components. Roadless areas serve as habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land.
Remoteness	Roadless areas provide economic opportunity due to rich primitive, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized classes of dispersed recreation.
Landscape	Roadless areas provide reference landscapes of relatively undisturbed areas that serve as a barometer to measure the effects of development on other parts of the landscape.
Scenery	Roadless areas have natural-appearing landscapes with high-scenic qualities that people value.
Cultural	Roadless areas are rich in traditional cultural properties and sacred sites. In Alaska indigenous peoples have been on national forests for more than 10,000 years and the forests have cultural significance.
Locally-Unique Characteristics	Roadless areas represent geographic areas with additional locally-unique characteristics specific to Alaska including: (a) important source of subsistence resources including terrestrial wildlife, waterfowl, mammals, fish, and plant-based resources; (b) rich habitat that supports multiple species of fish for personal, subsistence, sport, recreation, and commercial harvest; and (c) supports diverse economic opportunity that is especially important for rural community well-being.

DRAFT Alaska Roadless Area Land Management Categories (AKRA)

Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 6 provide a variety of management approaches within roadless areas through land management categories which include Land Use Designation (LUD) II Priority, Watershed Priority, Community Use Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority. The management categories prohibit timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction with a range of exceptions applied differentially across the alternatives.



Land Management Category	Alternatives Applied	Description
LUD II Priority	2, 4, 6	<p>The LUD II Priority category would reduce confusion by eliminating overlapping statutory and roadless regulatory management direction and manage these areas only in accordance with the statutory direction. These lands will be managed in a roadless state to retain their wildland character as defined in the TTRA (Title II, Section 201) and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291, 128 Stat. 3729, Section 3720(e)(4)).</p> <p>Approximately 870,000 acres of the Tongass are congressionally designated as LUD II (826,000 acres currently are additionally designated as IRA under the 2001 Roadless Rule and 44,000 acres currently not designated as IRA). Alternatives 2 and 4 propose to designate all of the congressionally designated LUD II acres as LUD II Priority AKRAs. Alternative 6 proposes to apply the LUD II Priority category only to LUD II areas that are currently designated as IRA.</p> <p>Notably, Alternative 3 proposes to remove all LUD II areas from roadless designation rather than designating an AKRA category. LUD II areas under Alternative 3 would continue to be managed under their congressional designations.</p>
Watershed Priority	2, 3	<p>The Watershed Priority category is more protective than the 2001 Roadless Rule as it offers fewer exceptions for timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction. It also provides for activities specific to aquatic habitat improvement. Approximately 3,250,000 acres in Alternative 2 whilst 3,208,000 acres in Alternative 3 would be managed under this management category. The Watershed Priority category is applied to areas identified in the 2016 Forest Plan as Tongass 77 (T77) Watersheds and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. Additionally, for Alternative 3, commercial old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited on National Forest System lands in T77 and TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas including those that extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.</p>
Community Use Priority	3	<p>The Community Use Priority category allows for small-scale timber harvest and associated road construction and reconstruction. In addition, it allows for infrastructure development to connect and support local communities and traditional Alaska Native cultural uses. In all cases, activities within Community Use Priority AKRAs would have to be consistent with the underlying Forest Plan LUD requirements. This is to say that even if a timber harvest, road building, or other activity would be permissible under the Alaska Roadless Rule, it may not be allowable because of Forest Plan requirements specific to the LUD that applies to the area. This management category applies to approximately 241,000 acres and is only proposed in Alternative 3 adjacent to five communities: Sitka, Wrangell, Juneau, Ketchikan, and Yakutat. However, based on cooperating agency input, the Community Use Priority should have also been applied around the communities of Hydaburg and Kake and will be accommodated in the FEIS.</p> <p>This management category was developed to address specific desires of some communities to retain roadless protections while allowing for small timber operators in the community, infrastructure development to support the communities, and provide for traditional Alaska Native cultural uses. The Forest Service is seeking public input on this management category, specifically with respect to whether this designation should be applied to other communities/areas. The Forest Service proposes to consider applying the Community Use Priority land management category to AKRAs either adjacent to communities or within community use areas as requested by non-profit community associations organized under State of Alaska law (Alaska Statute 10.20.005), municipal governments, or tribal governments.</p>
Roadless Priority	2, 3, 4, 6	<p>The Roadless Priority management category is similar to the 2001 Roadless Rule but is less restrictive and addresses Alaska-specific concerns. Specifically, it expressly provides for infrastructure development to connect and support local communities, and road construction/reconstruction for access to renewable energy and leasable minerals. The leasable minerals exception provides for roading associated with geothermal, oil, gas, and/or coal development. In addition, the Roadless Priority category includes specific exceptions that, while they are already allowed under the 2001 Roadless Rule, are included to improve overall clarity.</p>
Timber Priority	4	<p>The Timber Priority category allows timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction to facilitate timber management and provide economic opportunity. This management category applies to approximately 856,000 acres and is only proposed in Alternative 4.</p>



Alternative	Priority Use Areas	Description
1 No Action	Not Applicable	<p>Alternative 1 is the no action alternative as required by NEPA and reflects a continuation of current land management pursuant to the 2001 Roadless Rule (see Map 1 in map packet or on CD). This alternative continues general prohibitions on tree harvest (and sale), road construction, and road reconstruction within IRAs with limited exceptions (Table 2-2).</p> <p>Under Alternative 1, roadless areas consist of 110 IRAs identified in the 2001 Roadless Rule. These IRAs were originally mapped in 1996 for the Tongass Forest Plan Revision and the provisions of the 2001 Roadless Rule (as provided for by the Court’s reinstatement Order) would apply to those IRAs (summarized below). As a result of ownership changes and boundary alignment corrections these IRAs currently encompass 9.2 million acres¹ of NFS land. Provisions of the 2001 Roadless Rule remain intact across the 110 IRAs, encompassing approximately 55 percent of the Tongass National Forest.</p> <p>Under Alternative 1, IRA boundary modifications would continue to require rulemaking except for minor administrative corrections.</p>
2 Roadless	LUD II Watershed Roadless	<p>Alternative 2 provides limited additional timber harvest opportunity while maximizing roadless area protections. It removes approximately 113,000 acres from roadless designation that have been substantially altered as identified by known prior road construction or timber harvest. These areas are generally known as “roadless” areas but also include additional areas considered to be substantially altered. Removed areas include both development and non-development LUDs. Alternative 2 also maximizes the geographic scope of roadless area protection by adding 133,000 acres as AKRAs.</p> <p>The 133,000 acres of added roadless areas include portions of congressionally-designated LUD II areas not included as IRAs under the 2001 Roadless Rule, currently unroaded small islands, and unroaded areas greater than 5,000 acres as identified by prior forest planning efforts. Adding additional roadless protections to unroaded islands provides for long-term, continued recreational and outfitter and guide opportunities on these islands.</p> <p>After removals and additions, Alternative 2 consists of 9.22 million inventoried roadless acres or about 20,000 more roadless acres than under Alternative 1. The 9.22 million acres are designated to three AKRA land management categories: LUD II Priority, Watershed Priority, and Roadless Priority (see Map 2 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>Alternative 2 applies the most protective AKRA category, Watershed Priority, to 3.25 million acres, primarily identified as T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas in the Forest Plan. The Watershed Priority category is considered most protective because it includes fewer exceptions than the 2001 Roadless Rule, while still allowing activities needed for watershed protection, maintenance, or improvement.</p> <p>Alternative 2 converts a net total of 18,000 old-growth forest acres and 10,000 young-growth acres, previously identified as unsuitable for timber harvest, to suitable.</p>
3 Logical Extension (Preferred)	Watershed Roadless Community Use	<p>Alternative 3 is one of two preferred alternatives and provides moderate additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining substantial roadless area protections. Alternative 3 maintains roadless protections for T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas inside roadless areas and also prohibits old-growth commercial harvest in these areas outside of roadless areas (similar to the Forest Plan). Additional timber harvest opportunity is provided by removing substantially-altered roadless areas (including roadless, similar to Alternative 2) and extending the bounds of these areas to logical end points of existing road and timber harvest systems (about 212,000 acres), generally defined as the nearest watershed boundary (i.e., ridgeline of 14th-field hydrologic unit) from an existing road system. Removing these areas from the roadless inventory represents the logical extensions of substantially altered acres from existing infrastructure and likely encompasses the more economically feasible locations for future timber harvest with the least impact to roadless characteristics. Additional timber harvest opportunity is provided by designation of Community Use Priority AKRAs around five communities, namely Yakutat, Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Wrangell.</p> <p>Alternative 3 removes approximately 1.2 million acres from roadless designation including both development and non-development LUD acres. Alternative 3 also adds 105,000 acres to AKRAs as Roadless Priority including unroaded small islands and unroaded areas greater than 5,000 acres as identified by prior forest planning efforts. Adding additional roadless protections to unroaded islands provides for long-term, continued recreational and outfitter and guide opportunities on these islands.</p> <p>Alternative 3 applies the most protective AKRA category, Watershed Priority, to 3.21 million acres identified as T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. The Watershed Priority category is considered most protective because it includes fewer exceptions than the 2001 Roadless Rule, while still allowing activities needed for watershed protection, maintenance, or improvement. Additionally, for Alternative 3, commercial old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited on National Forest System lands in T77 and TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas including those that extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.</p> <p>The remaining roadless areas include 4.65 million acres in Roadless Priority and 0.24 million acres in Community Use Priority (see Map 3 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>Alternative 3 proposes a net decrease of 1.1 million roadless acres, as compared to the no action alternative, and includes both development and non-development LUDs. Roadless area designation would be removed from the 826,000 congressionally-designated LUD II acres that are currently within an</p>

		<p>inventoried roadless area. The removal of roadless designation from congressionally-designated LUD II acres represents the majority of the decrease in roadless acres proposed under Alternative 3. Removing roadless designation from LUD II acres retains the congressional mandate for LUD II areas and assures the lands will be managed “in a roadless state to retain their wildland character” as provided for in the 1986 and 1979 plans.</p> <p>Alternative 3 would convert a net of 76,000 old-growth acres and 14,000 young-growth acres, previously identified as unsuitable timber lands, to suitable timber lands.</p> <p>Additional Protections Note - T77 Watersheds and TNC Audubon Conservation Priority Areas: Watershed protection is a key element of roadless management. Watersheds are highly valued sources of municipal drinking water, support fisheries and wildlife habitat, and can act as keystones for economic activities. In Alternative 3, areas identified in the 2016 Tongass Forest Plan as T77 watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas (high-priority watershed areas) outside of inventoried roadless areas would be afforded added protection through the roadless regulation. Specifically, old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited within these areas, subject to the described exceptions. A prohibition on old-growth harvesting currently exists through the Forest Plan. But Alternative 3 establishes regulatory continuity between these roadless and watershed management systems given how extensively they overlap (the listed watersheds comprise over half of the Tongass’ roadless areas, and approximately 90 percent of the watershed areas are currently within roadless area boundaries). Thus, the old-growth harvest prohibition would be extended beyond the designated roadless area boundaries in order to maintain the balance and integrity of the watershed protection system. As with all roadless rule provisions, the new prohibition would supersede the current and future forest plans, with the plan continuing to provide management direction in other regards. In this manner, Alternative 3 affords high-priority watershed areas greater protection than under the 2001 Roadless Rule. Young-growth commercial timber harvest outside of AKRAs within these high-priority watershed areas is not prohibited. This would apply to about 377,000 acres outside of roadless areas.</p>
4 Partial Development LUDs (Preferred)	LUD II Roadless Timber	<p>Alternative 4 is one of two preferred alternatives and provides significant additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining roadless protections for Scenic Viewsheds LUDs and T77/TNC-Audubon Conservation Priority Areas that are in roadless areas. Approximately 375,000 acres are removed from roadless designation, including substantially-altered areas and logical extensions of substantially-altered acres (similar to Alternatives 2 and 3), along with selected additional locations for potentially feasible economic timber sales. These acres are also converted from unsuitable to suitable timber lands, resulting in significant additional timber harvest opportunity. Protection is maintained for Scenic Viewsheds, and most T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas by designating them as Roadless Priority category AKRAs.</p> <p>Additionally, Alternative 4 adds 32,000 acres to AKRA as LUD II Priority category. These added roadless acres are LUD II areas that were not designated as roadless under the 2001 Roadless Rule. No additional lands would be added to AKRAs.</p> <p>The net result of removals and additions under Alternative 4 is 8.86 million roadless acres, which are designated into three categories of AKRAs: LUD II Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority (see Map 4 in map packet or on CD). This alternative was developed to provide for a high level of timber management opportunities thus, timber management is permitted in the Timber Priority category, which consists of the Timber Production and Modified Landscape LUDs, as identified in the Forest Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 4 proposes a net decrease of 343,000 roadless acres as compared to the no action alternative. However, the total net decrease is substantially higher when also including Timber Priority category acres, yielding a combined decrease of 1.09 million total acres.</p> <p>Alternative 4 converts a net of 158,000 old-growth acres and 15,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>
5 Full Exemption	Not Applicable	<p>Alternative 5 provides maximum additional timber harvest opportunity and is the full exemption alternative, which was requested by the State of Alaska’s petition (Appendix A). It removes all 9.20 million inventoried roadless acres on the Tongass from roadless protection (see Map 5 in map packet or on CD). Acres removed from roadless protection would continue to be managed by other applicable statutes, regulations, and the Forest Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 5 would add the following provision into the “Scope and Applicability” section of the 2001 Roadless Rule: “This subpart does not apply to road construction, road reconstruction, or the cutting, sale, or removal of timber in inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest.”</p> <p>Alternative 5 also converts a net total of 165,000 old-growth acres and 20,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>
6 All Development LUDs	LUD II Roadless	<p>Alternative 6 provides maximum additional timber harvest opportunity by removing roadless protections from all Timber Development, Modified Landscape, and Scenic Viewshed LUDs identified by the Forest Plan, including T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas within the aforementioned development LUDs. Areas with mineral potential, as identified by the Forest Plan’s minerals overlay, are also removed from roadless protection (see Map 6 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>In total, 2.30 million acres would be removed from roadless area protection including mineral overlay acres and the majority of development LUDs, including conservation-designated acres. The remaining 6.91 million roadless acres are designated to two AKRA land management categories: Roadless Priority and LUD II Priority (see Map 6 in map packet or on CD). Alternative 6 also converts a net total of 165,000 old-growth acres and 17,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>

Roadless Areas by Alternative and Management Category

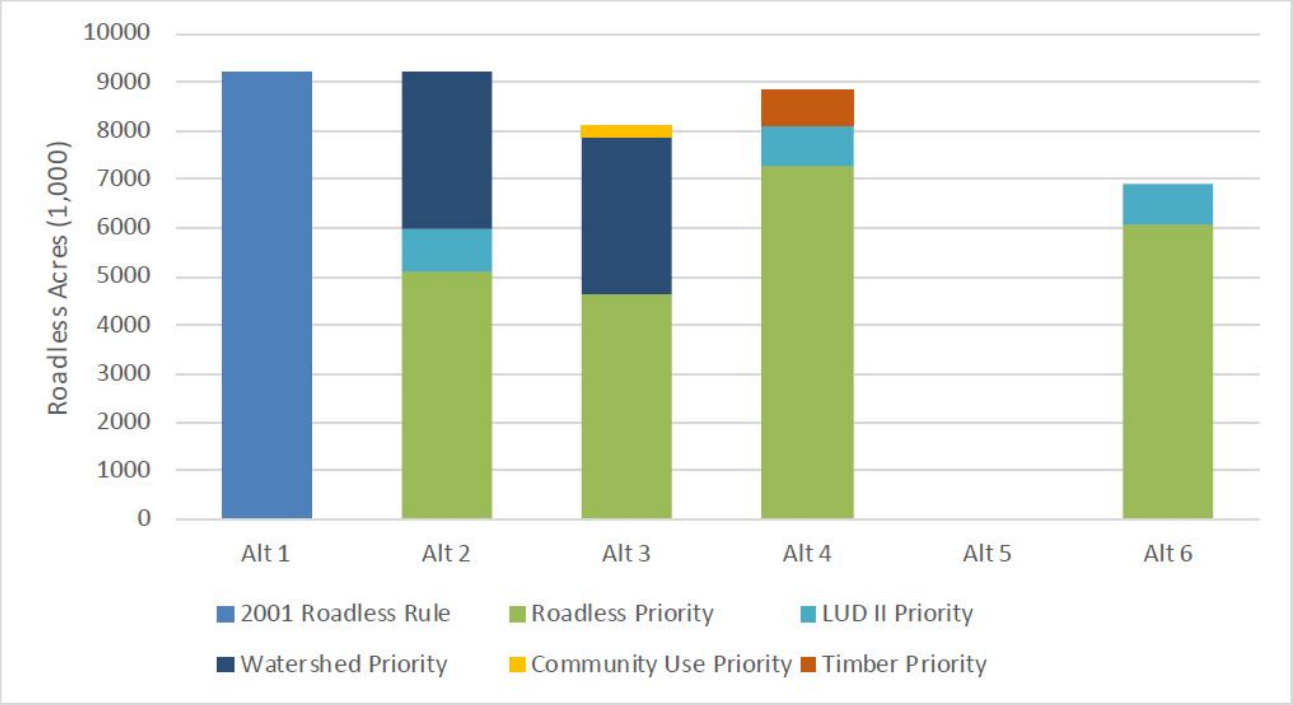
Roadless Category (acres)	Alternative					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No Action	Roaded Roadless	Logical Extension	Partial Dev. LUDs ¹	Full Exemption	All Dev. LUDs
Total Roadless Area	9,200,000	9,220,000	8,103,000	8,857,000	0	6,905,000
AKRA Management Categories						
Roadless Priority	N/A	5,114,000	4,653,000	7,252,000	0	6,078,000
LUD II Priority	N/A	856,000	0	856,000	0	828,000
Watershed Priority	N/A	3,250,000	3,208,000	0	0	0
Community Use Priority	N/A	0	241,000	0	0	0
Timber Priority	N/A	0	0	749,000	0	0
Change in Roadless Area Acres						
Roadless Area Removed	0	113,000	1,202,000	375,000	9,200,000	2,298,000
Roadless Area Added	0	133,000	105,000	32,000	0	3,000
Net Change	0	20,000	-1,098,000	-343,000	-9,200,000	-2,295,000
Old-Growth Acres Suitable for Harvest						
Total Acres	230,000	247,000	305,000	388,000	395,000	395,000
Net Change	0	18,000	76,000	158,000	165,000	165,000
T77 & TNC/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas Outside of Roadless given Long-term Protection						
Total Acres	0	0	377,000	0	0	0
Potentially Suitable Old Growth Acres	0	0	49,000 ²	0	0	0

N/A = not applicable

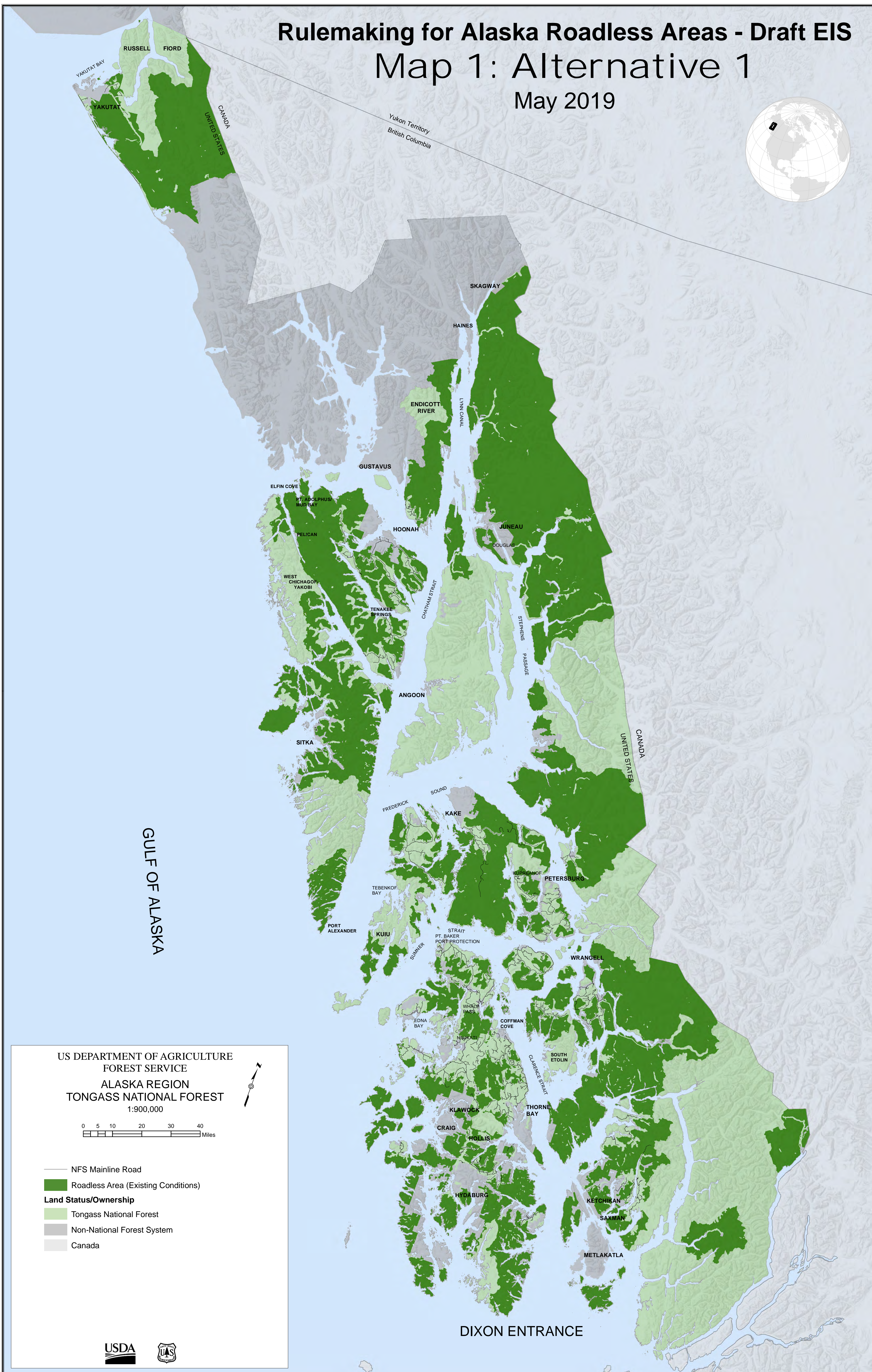
¹ Includes Timber Production and Modified Landscape LUDs, but not Scenic View shed.

² Includes old growth that would be suitable except for prohibition on old-growth harvests in Tongass 77 (T77) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. Overall, there are 171,000 acres of old growth within T77 and TNC/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas outside of roadless areas.

Roadless Areas by Alternative and Management Category



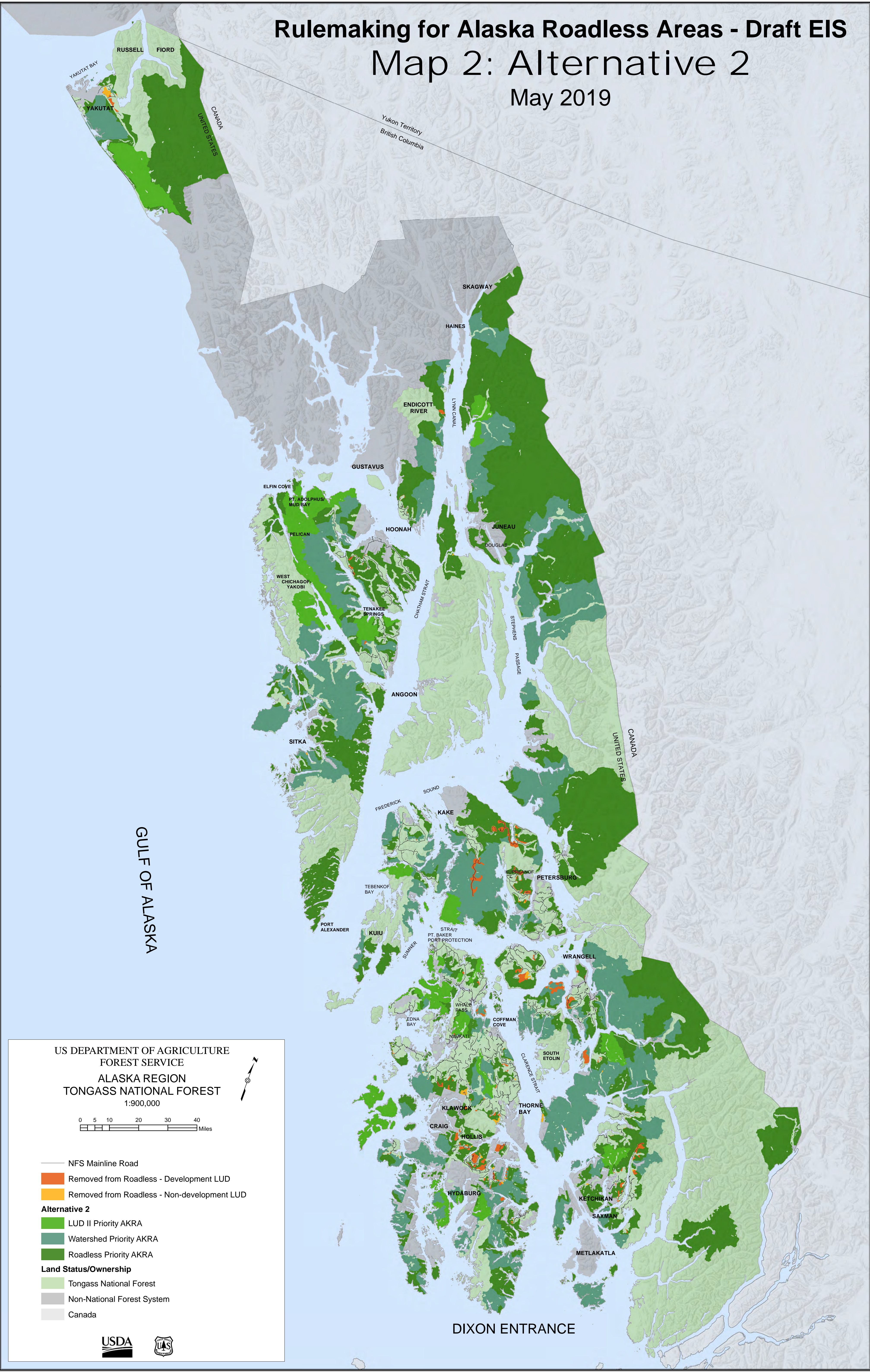
May 2019



Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Areas - Draft EIS

Map 2: Alternative 2

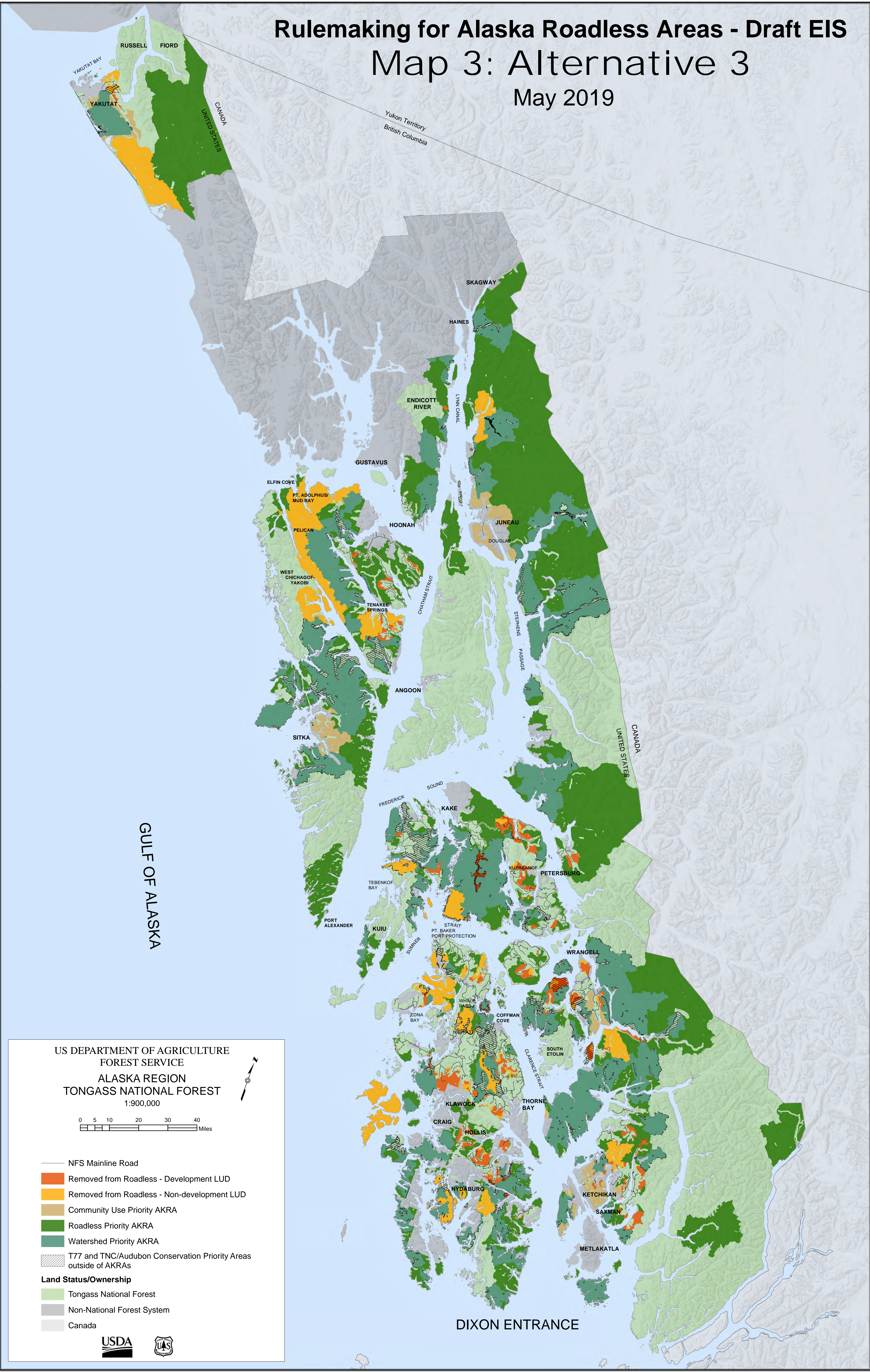
May 2019



Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Areas - Draft EIS

Map 3: Alternative 3

May 2019



May 2019



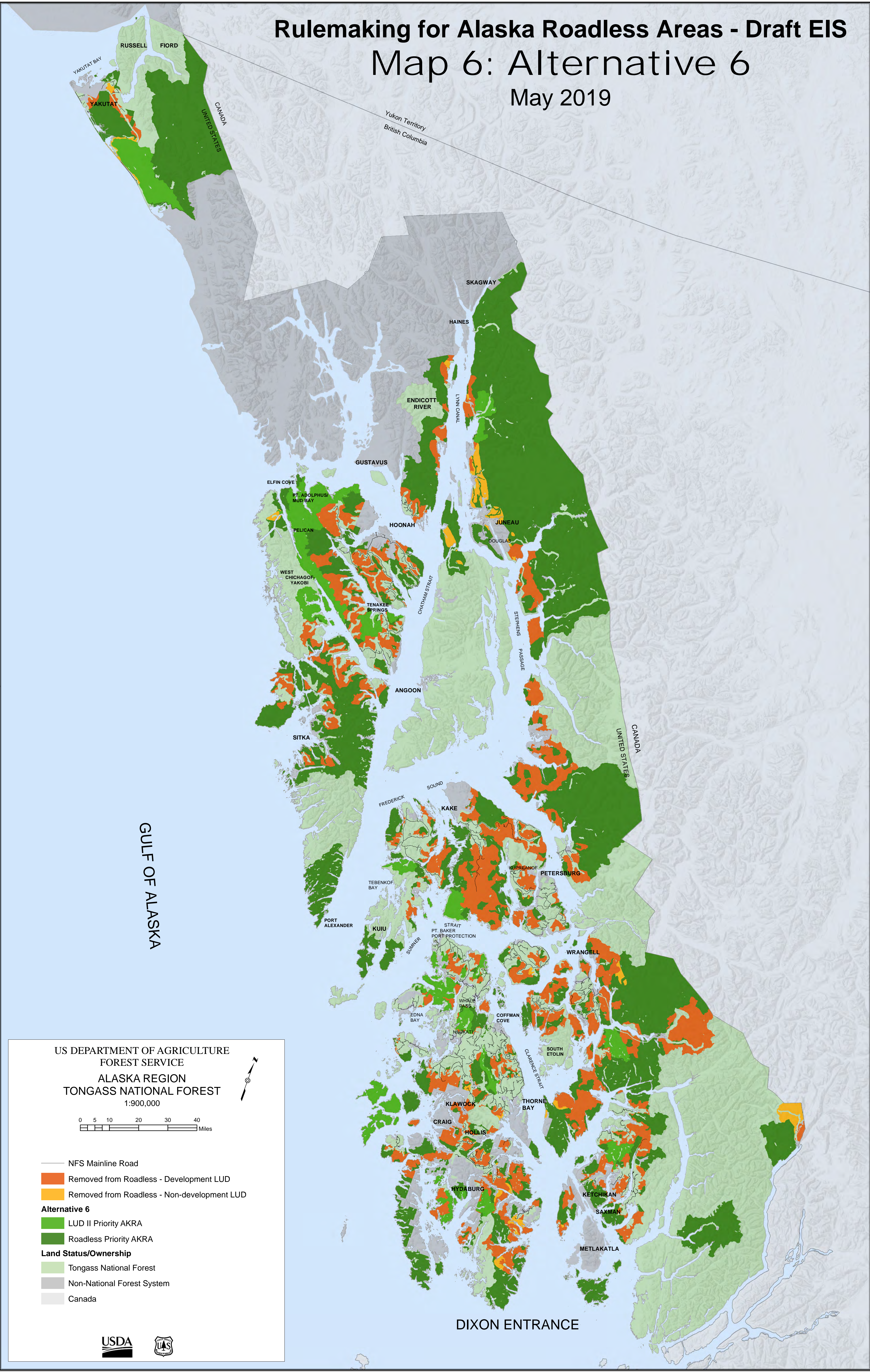
May 2019



Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Areas - Draft EIS

Map 6: Alternative 6

May 2019





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region

P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628

File Code: 1950

Date: AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Ms. Nancy Barnes
President, Board of Directors
Eyak Corporation
P.O. Box 340
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear Ms. Barnes:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Raymond Theodore, President
Knikatu Incorporated
P.O. Box 872130
Wasilla, AK 99687

Dear Mr. Theodore:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region

P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628

File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Greg Encelewski
President, CEO
Ninilchik Native Association, Inc.
15730 Sterling Hwy, PO Box 39130
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear Mr. Encelewski:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date: AUG -8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Christopher Manfor, President
Salamatof Native Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Mr. Manfor:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Tony Cange, CEO
Seldovia Native Association
P.O. Box A
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear Mr. Cange:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-corporation consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion, and I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1950

Date: **AUG -8 2018**

RECORD COPY

Mrs. Michaelene Stephan, President
Tyonek Native Corporation
1689 C Street, Suite 219
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mrs. Spephan:

Recently in a letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Chad VanOrmer, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Robin Dale





File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chenega Bay IRA Council
President
Mr. Larry Evanoff
P.O. Box 8079
Chenega Bay, AK 99574

Dear Mr. Evanoff:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your tribal interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with tribal governments, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Tribal government input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre Tongass National Forest contains approximately 9.2 million acres of inventoried Roadless areas.




In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chickaloon Village
Traditional Chief
Mr. Gary Harrison
P.O. Box 1105
Chickaloon, AK 99674

Dear Mr. Harrison:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your tribal interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Native Village of Eklutna
President
Mr. Aaron Leggett
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, AK 99567

Dear Mr. Leggett:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your tribal interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Native Village of Eyak
President
Mr. Darrel Olsen
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear Mr. Olsen:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Kenaitze Indian Tribe
Executive Director
Ms. Dawn Nelson
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Ms. Nelson:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Knik Tribal Council
President
Mr. Mike Tucker
P.O. Box 871565
Wasilla, AK 99687-1565

Dear Mr. Tucker:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Nanwalek IRA Council
First Chief
Mr. John Kvasnikoff
P.O. Box 8028
Nanwalek, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Kvasnikoff:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Ninilchik Traditional Council
President
Mr. Richard Encelewski
P.O. Box 39070
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear Mr. Encelewski:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Port Graham Village Council
Chief
Mr. Patrick Norman
P.O. Box 5510
Port Graham, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Norman:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Native Village of Salamatoff
President
Ms. Penny Carty
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Ms. Carty:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Seldovia Village Tribe
President
Ms. Crystal Collier
P.O. Box L
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear Ms. Collier:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Native Village of Tatitlek
President
Ms. Nanci Robart
P.O. Box 171
Tatitlek, AK 99677

Dear Ms. Robart:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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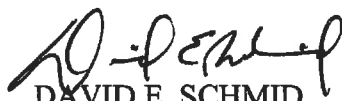
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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Native Village of Tyonek
President
Mr. Alfred Goozmer
P.O. Box 82009
Tyonek, AK 99682

Dear Mr. Goozmer :

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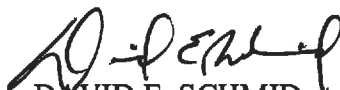
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DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Angoon Community Association
President
Ms. Jennette Kookesh
P.O. Box 328
Angoon, AK 99820

Dear Ms. Kookesh:

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I value transparency with tribal governments, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Tribal government input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

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In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
President
Mr. Richard Peterson
320 West Willoughby Avenue, Suite 300
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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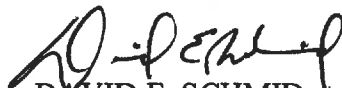
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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chilkat Indian Village
President
Ms. Kimberly Strong
HC60 Box 2207
Haines, AK 99827

Dear Ms. Strong:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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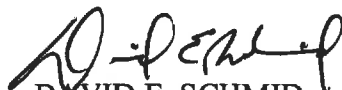
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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Chilkoot Indian Association
President
Mr. Les Katzeek
P.O. Box 490
Haines, AK 99827

Dear Mr. Katzeek:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Craig Tribal Association
President
Mr. Clinton E. Cook Sr.
P.O. Box 828
Craig, AK 99921

Dear Mr. Cook:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Douglas Indian Association
President
Mr. Clarence Laiti
811 W. 12th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Mr. Laiti:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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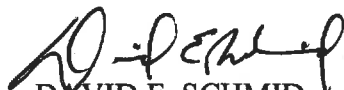
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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Hoonah Indian Association
President
Mr. Frank Wright, Jr.
P.O. Box 602
Hoonah, AK 99829

Dear Mr. Wright:

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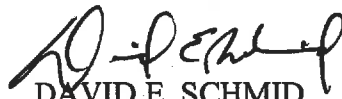
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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Hydaburg Cooperative Association
President
Mr. Sidney Edenshaw
P.O. Box 349
Hydaburg, AK 99922

Dear Mr. Edenshaw:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Organized Village of Kake
President
Mr. Joel Jackson
P.O. Box 316
Kake, AK 99830

Dear Mr. Jackson:

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If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Organized Village of Kasaan
President
Mr. Ronald Leighton
P.O. Box 26-KXA
Kasaan, AK 99950

Dear Mr. Leighton:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Ketchikan Indian Community
President
Mr. Norman Skan
2960 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mr. Skan:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Klawock Cooperative Association
President
Ms. Yodean Armour
P.O. Box 430
Klawock, AK 99925

Dear Ms. Armour:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Metlakatla Indian Community
Mayor
Mr. Karl Cook
P.O. Box 8
Metlakatla, AK 99926

Dear Mr. Cook:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Petersburg Indian Association
President
Ms. Tracy Welch
P.O. Box 1418
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear Ms. Welch:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Organized Village of Saxman
President
Mr. Lee Wallace
Route 2, Box 2, Saxman
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mr. Wallace:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Chairman
Ms. KathyHope Erickson
456 Katlian Street
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Ms. Erickson:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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Enclosures: (11)

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Skagway Traditional Council
President
Ms. Jamie Bricker
P.O. Box 1157
Skagway, AK 99840

Dear Ms. Bricker:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Wrangell Cooperative Association
President
Mr. Richard Oliver
P.O. Box 2021
Wrangell, AK 99929

Dear Mr. Oliver:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

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The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's



File Code: 1560
Date: June 10, 2019

Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
President
Mr. JP Buller
P.O. Box 418
Yakutat, AK 99689

Dear Mr. Buller:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Forest Service are approaching an important milestone in the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule – the publishing of the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule and corresponding Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will initiate a 60-day public comment period anticipated to start during July 2019.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Specifically, I am interested in consulting on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, Alaska Roadless area characteristics, project purpose and need statement, and alternatives and associated maps, which are attached to this memo. I am also interested in learning about any other aspects of the project that may have an impact to your tribal interests. The proposed rule primarily applies to the Tongass National Forest, except for a provision that allows for roadless area boundary corrections and modifications that also applies to the Chugach National Forest. All current publicly-available documents related to the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule can be found online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54511>.

I value transparency with tribal governments, to the greatest extent and at the earliest point possible in the decision-making process. Tribal government input on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule is of critical importance to finding a long-term and durable solution to the conservation of roadless areas for future generations. To schedule a consultation, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke at (907) 586-7089 or melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov. In addition, a Forest Service representative will be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities for a leader-to-leader consultation on the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the district, forest, and regional levels.

As you may recall, the State of Alaska submitted a petition for regulatory rulemaking to the USDA in January 2018 to address the management of inventoried Roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest established by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule). The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction and timber harvest in areas designated as Roadless on National Forest System lands, with limited exceptions. The 16.8 million-acre Tongass National Forest contains approximately 9.2 million acres of inventoried Roadless areas.




In application, the 2001 Roadless Rule would be replaced with a state-specific Alaska Roadless Rule and substantive changes may include removing areas from Roadless designation, designating new areas as Roadless, modifying boundaries of Roadless areas, and redefining management activities that are allowed, or not allowed, in Roadless areas.

The USDA and State of Alaska reached an agreement to cooperatively develop an Alaska-specific Roadless rule that conserves Roadless areas for the future while also providing additional local economic opportunity. In addition, six federally-recognized tribal governments also agreed to participate as cooperating agencies in the development of an Alaska Roadless Rule. With the participation and important input of all seven cooperators, the Forest Service remains on target with publishing a final Alaska Roadless Rule by June 2020. The responsible official for deciding the Alaska Roadless Rule is the Secretary of Agriculture, or his designee.

If you have any questions about the Alaska Roadless Rule consultation process, please contact Alaska Region tribal relations program manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke via email at melinda.hernandezburke@usda.gov or phone at (907) 586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout the remainder of this important rulemaking effort.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Regional Forester

Enclosures: (11)

cc: Chad Vanormer, Dan Shively, Troy Heithecker, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, Robin Dale, Nicole Grewe, R10 FLT's

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (ALTERNATIVE 3)

§294.52 Alaska Roadless Areas

(a) Designations. All National Forest System lands within the Tongass National Forest listed in § 294.57 are hereby designated as Alaska Roadless Areas. Alaska Roadless Areas established by this subpart shall constitute the exclusive set of National Forest System lands within the State of Alaska to which the provisions of this subpart shall apply.

(b) Priority land management categories. Alaska Roadless Areas are subdivided into three categories: Roadless Priority, Community Priority, and Watershed Priority.

§294.53 Road construction and reconstruction in Alaska Roadless Areas.

(a) A road may not be constructed or reconstructed in Alaska Roadless Areas, except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.

(b) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

- (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
- (2) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of essential public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;
- (3) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);
- (4) A road is needed for one of the following reasons and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the Alaska Roadless Area is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative:
 - (i) a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, that the Secretary of Agriculture determines is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired; or
 - (ii) transportation needs identified by the State of Alaska's Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan that are needed for the connection of communities and development of the regional transportation system;
- (5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
- (6) A road is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration or to provide administrative access to a designated experimental forest;
- (7) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if deemed essential for authorized public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
- (8) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;
- (9) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system such as



municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(10) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or

(11) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road.

(c) **Community Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Community Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty, and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the AKRA area is environmentally preferable and site-specific measures can be designed to minimize effects on water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity;

(2) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);

(3) A road is needed for micro sales, salvage sales, and small commercial sales less than one million board feet of timber;

(4) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and that cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;

(5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;

(6) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;

(7) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;

(8) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road;

(9) The Secretary of Agriculture determines that a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired and no other reasonable alternative exists;

(10) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(11) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or

(12) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a developed recreation site.

(d) **Watershed Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Watershed Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:



- (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty. To the maximum extent permissible under such authorities, roads authorized pursuant to this provision will be limited to situations where no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the AKRA area is environmentally preferable and site-specific measures are designed to minimize effects on water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity;
- (2) The Secretary of Agriculture determines that a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired and no other reasonable alternative exists;
- (3) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
- (4) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and that cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
- (5) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road; or
- (6) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property.

§294.54 Timber harvest in Alaska Roadless Areas.

(a) Timber harvest is prohibited in Alaska Roadless Areas except as provided in paragraph (b), (c) and (d) of this section. Additionally, except as provided in paragraph (c), commercial old-growth timber harvest is prohibited on National Forest System lands as depicted in a map maintained by Chief's Office that identifies high priority watersheds that largely coincide with Alaska Roadless Areas, but extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.

(b) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

- (1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
- (2) Timber harvest is needed for mineral exploration and mine development, subject to existing laws and regulations;
- (3) Timber harvest is needed for the cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;
- (4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:
 - (i) To maintain, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or
 - (ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure, and processes;
- (5) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;
- (6) Timber harvest is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration;



(7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;

(8) Timber harvest is needed for public health and safety, including removal of hazard trees; or

(9) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including the construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.

(c) **Watershed Priority.** Timber harvest may occur if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;

(2) The cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses, that does not degrade water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic diversity, or soil productivity;

(3) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:

(i) To maintain, restore or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or

(ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure;

(4) Timber harvest is incidental to trail or recreation development that does not degrade water quality, fish habitat, fish production, fish passage, aquatic biodiversity, or soil productivity; or

(5) Timber harvest is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property.

(d) **Community Priority.** Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Area designated as Community Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

(1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;

(2) The cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees is for the purpose of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;

(3) Timber harvest is undertaken as a micro sale, salvage sale, or small commercial sale less than one million board feet of timber;

(4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:

(i) To maintain, restore or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or

(ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure;

(5) Timber harvest is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;

(6) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;

(7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines; or



(8) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including trail or recreation development; and the construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.

§294.55 Corrections and modifications.

Administrative correction or modification of designations made pursuant to this subpart may be made as follows:

- (a) Administrative corrections to boundaries. The Regional Forester for the Alaska Region may issue administrative corrections to the boundaries of an Alaska Roadless Area and/or high priority watersheds after a 30-day public notice and opportunity to comment period. Administrative corrections are limited to adjustments that remedy clerical errors, typographical errors, mapping errors, improvements in mapping technology, conformance to statutory or regulatory changes, or incorporation of changes due to land exchanges.
- (b) Administrative modifications to Classifications and Boundaries. The Regional Forester for the Alaska Region may issue modifications to the classifications and boundaries of an Alaska Roadless Area and/or high priority watersheds after a 45-day public notice and opportunity to comment period.
- (c) The procedures set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection shall also apply to any correction or modification of an inventoried roadless area boundaries within the Chugach National Forest as established pursuant to 66 FR 3244 (Jan. 12, 2001).

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (ALTERNATIVE 4)

§294.52 Alaska Roadless Areas

- (a) Designations. All National Forest System lands within the Tongass National Forest listed in § 294.57 are hereby designated as Alaska Roadless Areas. Alaska Roadless Areas established by this subpart shall constitute the exclusive set of National Forest System lands within the State of Alaska to which the provisions of this subpart shall apply.
- (b) Priority land management categories. Alaska Roadless Areas are subdivided into three categories: LUD II Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority.

§294.53 Road construction and reconstruction in Alaska Roadless Areas.

- (a) A road may not be constructed or reconstructed in Alaska Roadless Areas, except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.
- (b) LUD II Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as LUD II Priority if the Responsible Official determines that the road construction or reconstruction is consistent with the legislated management restrictions established in Section 201 of the Tongass Timber Reform Act or a road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty.
- (c) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, a road may be constructed or reconstructed in an Alaska Roadless Area designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:
 - (1) A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
 - (2) The road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of essential public facilities such as airports, marine access points, and communication equipment;

- (3) A road is needed to provide access to Alaska Native cultural site(s) if requested by an affected federally-recognized tribe(s);
 - (4) A road is needed for one of the following reasons and no other feasible routes exist or it can be demonstrated that routing through the Alaska Roadless Area is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative:
 - (i) a Federal Aid Highway project, authorized pursuant to Title 23 of the United States Code, that the Secretary of Agriculture determines is in the public interest or is consistent with the purposes for which the land was reserved or acquired; or
 - (ii) transportation needs identified by the State of Alaska's Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan that are needed for the connection of communities and development of the regional transportation system;
 - (5) A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural resource restoration action under CERCLA, Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, or the Oil Pollution Act;
 - (6) A road is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration, or to provide administrative access to a designated experimental forest;
 - (7) Road realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage that arises from the design, location, use, or deterioration of a road and cannot be mitigated by road maintenance. Road realignment may occur under this paragraph only if the road is deemed essential for authorized public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety;
 - (8) A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;
 - (9) A road is needed for the construction, expansion, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;
 - (10) A road is needed in conjunction with the construction, expansion, or maintenance of an authorized fishway, fish hatchery, or aquaculture facility; or
 - (11) Road reconstruction is needed to implement a road safety improvement project on a classified road determined to be hazardous on the basis of accident experience or accident potential on that road.
- (d) Timber Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, permanent or temporary roads may be constructed, reconstructed, or maintained within the Timber Priority Alaska Roadless Areas.

§294.54 Timber harvest in Alaska Roadless Areas.

- (a) Timber harvest is prohibited in Alaska Roadless Areas except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section.
- (b) LUD II Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Areas designated as LUD II Priority if the Responsible Official determines that timber harvest is consistent with the legislated management restrictions established in Section 201 of the Tongass Timber Reform Act or timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty.
- (c) Roadless Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber harvest may occur in Alaska Roadless Areas designated as Roadless Priority if the Responsible Official determines that one or more of the following circumstances exists:



- (1) Timber harvest is conducted pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided for by statute or treaty;
 - (2) Timber harvest is needed for mineral exploration and mine development, subject to existing laws and regulations;
 - (3) Timber harvest is needed for the cutting, customary trade, and removal of trees for the purposes of Alaska Native customary and traditional uses;
 - (4) Timber harvest is needed for one of the following purposes and will maintain or improve one or more of the roadless area characteristics:
 - (i) To maintain, restore, or improve fish and wildlife habitat; or
 - (ii) To maintain or restore the characteristics of ecosystem composition and structure, and processes;
 - (5) Timber harvest is needed for personal or administrative use, as provided for in 36 CFR part 223;
 - (6) Timber harvest is needed within a designated experimental forest for research or administration;
 - (7) Timber harvest is needed for the construction, expansion, utilization, or maintenance of a public utility system, such as municipal water and wastewater systems, biomass heating and energy systems, and hydroelectric and other renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, including transmission lines;
 - (8) Timber harvest is needed for public health and safety, including removal of hazard trees; or
 - (9) Timber harvest is incidental to the implementation of a management activity not otherwise prohibited by this subpart, including construction, expansion, or maintenance of authorized fishways, fish hatcheries, or aquaculture facilities.
- (d) Timber Priority. Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (a) of this section, timber may be cut, sold, or removed in lands designated Timber Priority Alaska Roadless Areas.

§294.55 Corrections and modifications.

Same language as ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED RULE (Alternative 3).

Chapter 1

Purpose of and Need for Action

The Forest Service has prepared this draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant federal laws and regulations. This DEIS discloses the potential environmental consequences that may result from the alternatives considered for the proposed Alaska Roadless Rules.

Additional documentation that describes DEIS development, the analyses of the effects of the alternatives considered on forest resources, public involvement, and other relevant documents may be found within the record located at the Forest Service's Alaska Region Office, in the Juneau Federal Building at 709 W. 9th Street, Juneau, Alaska.

Background

The Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule) was promulgated in January 2001 at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 294 (36 CFR 294), Subpart B (66 Federal Register [FR] 3244). Currently, about 9.2 million acres (55 percent) of the Tongass are managed as "inventoried roadless areas" (IRAs).⁵ Maps of IRAs, for the Tongass National Forest, are available online [here](#).⁶ IRAs contain generally undeveloped areas that are typically 5,000 acres or greater in size. The 2001 Roadless Rule applies nationwide (except Idaho and Colorado), and currently provides management direction for IRAs on 44.7 million acres of National Forests (approximately 24 percent of total National Forest System [NFS] lands) by prohibiting road construction and reconstruction and timber cutting, sale, or removal in those IRAs, with certain exceptions.

Since its promulgation, the 2001 Roadless Rule has been the subject of litigation. In 2001, the State of Alaska filed a complaint, challenging the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) promulgation of the 2001 Roadless Rule and its application in Alaska. The USDA and the State of Alaska reached a settlement in 2003, and the USDA subsequently issued a rule temporarily exempting the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule. In 2011, a federal court (District of Alaska) set aside the Tongass National Forest's exemption and reinstated the 2001 Roadless Rule on the Tongass National Forest (with special instructions). The Alaska District Court's ruling was initially reversed by a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit, but the District Court's ruling was ultimately upheld in a 6–5 en banc ruling of the Ninth Circuit in 2015. Consequently, the 2001 Roadless Rule remains in effect in Alaska and the Forest Service continues to apply the 2001 National Rule to the Tongass and Chugach National Forests.

In January 2018, the State of Alaska submitted a petition (Appendix A) requesting that the Secretary of Agriculture consider exempting the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule, pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and the USDA's petition procedures in 7 CFR 1.28. In June 2018, the Secretary of Agriculture directed the Forest Service to begin working to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule. In August 2018, the Forest Service granted cooperating agency status to the State of Alaska. The Forest Service and the State of Alaska believe that the proposed action represents a unique opportunity to collaboratively resolve and provide certainty to the roadless issue in the State of Alaska. The Forest Service published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) and initiate a public rulemaking process to address the management of IRAs on the Tongass National Forest on August 30, 2018 (83 FR 44252). As stated in that NOI, the USDA proposes to develop a durable and long-lasting regulation for the conservation and management of roadless areas

⁵ The original acreage of IRAs on the Tongass was approximately 9.34 million acres. As a result of ownership changes and boundary alignment corrections, including shoreline mapping adjustments, the current acreage is 9.20 million acres.

⁶ https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/roadless/2001roadlessrule/maps/statemaps/?cid=fsm8_037699

1 Purpose of and Need for Action

on the Tongass National Forest. The state-specific roadless rule would establish a land classification system designed to conserve roadless area characteristics on the Tongass National Forest while accommodating timber harvest and road construction/reconstruction activities that are determined to be needed for forest management, economic development opportunities, and the exercise of valid existing rights or other non-discretionary legal authorities.

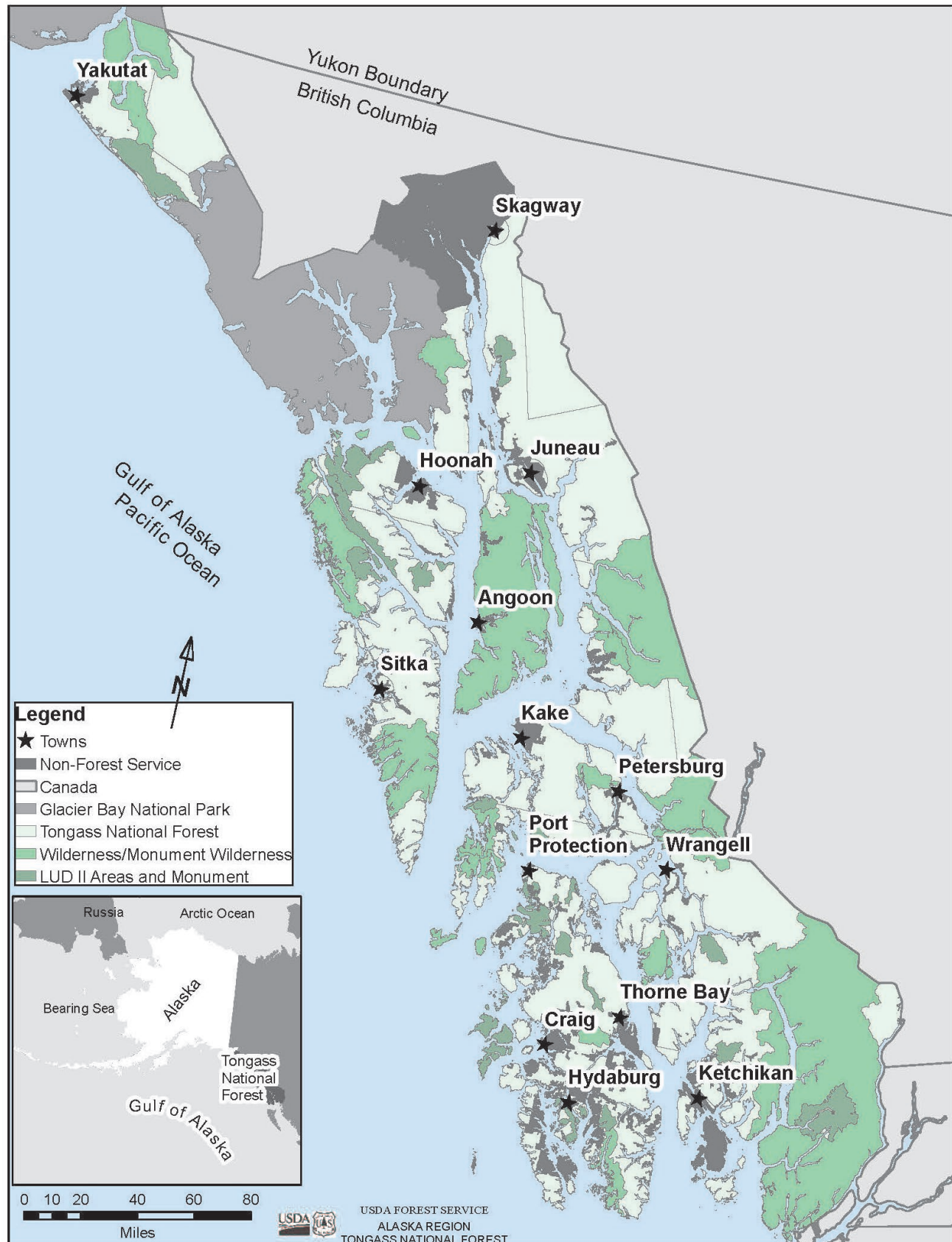
The proposed rule would not authorize any ground-disturbing activities, but rather it describes exceptions under which certain activities might be allowed within Alaska roadless areas. Before authorizing a land-use activity in roadless areas, the Forest Service must complete a site-specific environmental analysis, pursuant to the NEPA and its implementing regulations. When a specific project or activity is proposed on NFS land, the Forest Service conducts site-specific analyses of the effects associated with that project or activity and makes a decision that authorizes implementation of that project or activity.

Analysis Area

The 16.7-million-acre Tongass National Forest (hereafter Tongass or Forest) comprises approximately 7 percent of Alaska and 80 percent of percent of Southeast Alaska – Alaska's southeastern panhandle extending from the Dixon Entrance in the south to Yakutat Bay in the north, and bordered on the east by Canada and on the west by the Gulf of Alaska. The Tongass extends approximately 500 miles north to south, and approximately 120 miles east to west at its widest point. Figure 1-1 is a vicinity map of the Forest.

The Tongass includes a narrow mainland strip of steep, rugged mountains, and icefields and more than 1,000 offshore islands known as the Alexander Archipelago. Together, the islands and mainland have nearly 11,000 miles of meandering shoreline, with numerous bays and coves. A system of seaways separates the many islands and provides a protected waterway called the Inside Passage. Federal government public lands comprise approximately 95 percent of Southeast Alaska, with about 80 percent in the Tongass and the majority of the remaining lands in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. The remaining land is held by the State government, Alaska Native corporations, and other private ownerships. Most of the area of the Tongass is undeveloped. Approximately 73,000 people inhabit Southeast Alaska, primarily in 32 communities plus 2 seasonal communities located on islands or mainland coastal areas. Eight of the communities have populations greater than 1,000 persons. Most of these communities are surrounded by, or adjacent to, NFS land. Three communities are connected to other parts of the mainland by road: Haines and Skagway in the north and Hyder in the south.

Figure 1-1
Tongass National Forest Vicinity Map



1 Purpose of and Need for Action

Purpose and Need

In response to the State of Alaska's petition for rulemaking, the Forest Service and State of Alaska agree the controversy surrounding the management of Tongass roadless areas may be resolved through state-specific rulemaking. A long-term, durable approach to roadless area management is desired that accommodates the unique biological, social, and economic situation found in and around the Tongass. The Tongass is unique from other national forests with respect to size, percentage of IRAs, amount of NFS lands and subsequent dependency of 32 communities on federal lands, and unique Alaska and Tongass-specific statutory considerations (e.g., Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act [ANILCA]), Tongass Timber Reform Act [TTRA]).

The USDA and Forest Service believe the 2001 Roadless Rule prohibitions on timber harvest and road construction/reconstruction can be adjusted for the Tongass in a manner that meaningfully addresses local economic and development concerns while balancing roadless area conservation needs.

Proposed Action

The USDA proposes to develop a durable and long-lasting regulation for the conservation and management of roadless areas in Alaska on the Tongass. The State-specific roadless rule would establish a land classification system designed to conserve roadless area characteristics on the Tongass while affording limited opportunities for timber harvests and road construction/reconstruction activities that are determined to assist in providing forest management, economic development opportunities, and the exercise of valid existing rights or other non-discretionary legal authorities.

Decision Framework

This DEIS will inform the USDA Secretary or Undersecretary of Agriculture, in deciding whether to promulgate an Alaska state-specific rule as proposed, one of the other alternatives, or a combination of the alternatives as analyzed by the DEIS. Promulgation of a rule involves establishing regulations, which would be issued under 36 CFR Part 294, Subpart E.

Public Participation

The Forest Service published an NOI to prepare an EIS for the Alaska Roadless Rule in the FR on August 30, 2018. The NOI initiated a 45-day scoping period which ended on October 15, 2018. During this time period, the Forest Service conducted 17 public meetings including meetings in Anchorage, Alaska; Washington, DC; and communities throughout Southeast Alaska – Angoon, Craig, Gustavus, Hoonah, Kake, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Point Baker, Sitka, Tenakee Springs, Thome Bay, Wrangell, Yakutat, and two meetings in Juneau. During the public comment scoping period following the Aug. 30, 2018 publication of the Notice of Intent of Proposed Rulemaking in the FR (83 FR 44252) which ended Oct. 15, 2018, just over 144,000 entries were logged.

Tribal and Native Corporation Participation

On July 30, 2018, the Forest Service sent letters to 32 federally-recognized tribes and 27 Alaska Native corporations, within Southeast and Southcentral Alaska, initiating government-to-government and government-to-corporation consultation on the Alaska Roadless Rule.

Cooperating Agencies

The following are cooperating agencies for the Alaska Rulemaking process:

- Angoon Community Association;
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska;
- Hoonah Indian Association;
- Hydaburg Community Association;
- Organized Village of Kake;

- Organized Village of Kasaan; and
- State of Alaska.

On July 30, 2018, the Forest Service invited 19 Southeast Alaska federally-recognized tribes to participate as cooperating agencies during the rulemaking process. Six tribes agreed to become cooperating agencies and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The tribes were invited to be cooperating agencies due to their specialized knowledge and expertise of land management, subsistence, natural resources, and potential impacts to specific communities within Alaska.

The State of Alaska requested cooperating agency status for the Alaska rulemaking process on June 19, 2018 and entered into an MOU on August 2, 2018. The State of Alaska is the petitioner for the rulemaking process and has special knowledge and expertise relative to natural resources, economic growth and development, resource planning, transportation, and other matters which may be affected by Forest Service management.

The State of Alaska's input as a cooperating agency was informed by the Alaska Roadless Rule Citizens Advisory Committee (the Committee). In September 2018, Governor Walker issued Administrative Order 299 to establish the Committee, which was charged with providing recommendations to assist the State in fulfilling its role as a cooperating agency. Thirteen Committee members were selected by Governor Walker to represent a diversity of perspectives, including Alaska Native corporations and tribes, fishing, timber, conservation, tourism, utilities, mining, transportation, local government, and the Alaska Division of Forestry. A Forest Service representative served in an ex officio capacity to provide technical expertise for the Committee's deliberations. The Committee met for three in-person meetings in the fall of 2018 (October 2-3 in Juneau; October 24-26 in Ketchikan; and November 6-8 in Sitka). Meetings were open to the public, and each meeting included an opportunity for public comment. A final report was produced with options for the State of Alaska to consider and was provided as part of their Cooperating Agency comments to the Forest Service.

Key Issues

The regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.2) require federal agencies to develop and evaluate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal that involves unresolved conflict concerning alternative uses of available resources. Public involvement was used to identify points of disagreement about the proposed Alaska Roadless Rule, and to identify key issues to use as a basis for developing and evaluating alternatives. The following three key issues were identified for the Alaska state-specific roadless rulemaking effort and will be carried forward throughout the analysis.

Key Issue 1 – Conserve roadless area characteristics

The Tongass includes large undeveloped areas, with several portions of the Forest consisting of contiguous roadless areas that exceed 1 million acres and represent large blocks of unfragmented wildlife habitats, undeveloped or natural areas, and opportunities for primitive recreation and/or solitude. This large scale of roadless areas, including wildernesses and national monuments, does not exist anywhere else in the NFS outside of Alaska. The Tongass is the largest national forest in the United States and the majority of the Tongass is in a natural condition, unlike most other national forests. It represents one of the largest, relatively intact temperate rainforests in the world.

Roadless areas are important because of their wildlife and fish habitat, recreation values, importance to multiple economic sectors, inherent passive use values, traditional properties and sacred sites for local indigenous people, and ecosystem services values they provide. Passive use values represent the value that individuals assign to a resource independent of their use of that resource and typically include existence, option, and bequest values. These values represent the value that individuals obtain from knowing that expansive roadless areas exist, knowing that they are available to visit in the future should they choose to do so, and knowing that they are available for future generations to inherit.

Ecosystem services represent the services provided to society by healthy ecosystems. These services and benefits include what some consider to be long-term life support benefits to society as a whole. Examples of ecosystem services include watershed services, soil stabilization and erosion control, improved air quality, climate regulation, carbon sequestration, and biological diversity.

1 Purpose of and Need for Action

The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Qualitative degree of impacts to roadless area characteristics;
- Total acres of roadless areas by alternative and by Alaska Roadless Area (AKRA) category;
- Acres of roadless area removed and added; and
- Acres of roadless area in development LUDs.

Key Issue 2 – Support local and regional socioeconomic well-being, Alaska Native culture, rural subsistence lifestyles, and economic opportunity across multiple economic sectors

The Tongass comprises approximately 80 percent of Southeast Alaska and therefore plays a critical role in supporting local and regional economy, promoting economic diversification, and also enhancing rural community well-being. The visitor industry, seafood industry, and resource extraction industries contribute to local jobs and income alongside public sector employment spanning federal, state, and local government. While the visitor and seafood industries are the largest private-sector employers across Southeast Alaska, resource extraction remains important in some rural communities where jobs are limited and unemployment is oftentimes high.

The Forest Service manages land for the multiple-use and sustained yield of all renewable resources. There is fragmentation and disagreement among the public regarding the best management of federal lands for economic development purposes and to support the overall economic vitality of Tongass communities. Many believe the visitor industry and seafood industries have become the mainstay of Southeast Alaska's economy and therefore should have prominence in Forest Service land management decision-making. Others note that resource extraction, including forest products and the minerals industry, continue to provide jobs and income sources in remote and isolated Southeast communities. Furthermore, Southeast Alaska residents, communities, and Alaska Native individuals and tribes provide consistent reminders of Tongass value for subsistence uses, recreational hunting and fishing, and independent travelers and outdoor enthusiasts – and that these activities yield economic value as well.

The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Qualitative degree of effect to forest products industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to visitor industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to fisheries industry;
- Qualitative degree of effect to locatable and leasable minerals development potential;
- Qualitative degree of effect to energy project development potential;
- Qualitative degree of effect to major transportation projects;
- Acres of forest land suitable for timber production (old growth and young growth);
- Acres of increase in suitable old growth by substantially altered areas, logical extensions of roaded areas, and areas more distant from roads;
- Acres of increase in high-volume suitable old growth by substantially altered areas, logical extensions of roaded areas, and areas more distant from roads;
- Qualitative degree of support for Alaska Native culture due to improved access to tree harvest for cultural purposes;
- Qualitative degree of support for subsistence lifestyles; and
- Qualitative degree of effects to communities – overall level of potential change for communities.

Key Issue 3 – Conserve terrestrial habitat, aquatic habitat, and biological diversity

The Tongass includes large, undeveloped, and natural land areas that represent expansive unfragmented blocks of wildlife habitat. This scale and size of contiguous habitat is not available elsewhere in the NFS outside of Alaska. Although wildlife species on the Tongass are associated with more than one habitat type, many inhabit old-growth forests or prey on species that inhabit old-growth forests. The Old-growth Habitat Conservation Strategy was developed to maintain the integrity of the old-growth forest ecosystem, and thereby conserve biological diversity across the Forest by retaining intact, largely undisturbed habitat. In addition, because of its predominantly undeveloped nature, a number of wide-ranging species find optimal habitat in the more remote areas of the Forest.

Fish and the aquatic resources on the Tongass support subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries, as well as traditional and cultural values. The Tongass includes high-value, intact watersheds that were designated to be managed for intact ecological values and aquatic habitat productivity, and many commenters believe these areas should be protected so that they can continue to provide the clean water and fish habitats that are essential to the ecological and economic health of the Southeast Alaska communities and residents who rely on them.

The following units of measure are used to evaluate how each alternative responds to this key issue:

- Percent of existing and original productive old growth (POG) harvested over the long term;
- Percent of original high-volume POG harvested over the long term;
- Percent of original large-tree POG harvested over the long term;
- Acres of young-growth harvest in sensitive areas;
- Average road density over the long term;
- Percent of Wildlife Analysis Areas (WAAs) with road density <0.7 miles/square mile; and
- Qualitative ratings of species-specific effects.

DRAFT Alaska Roadless Area Characteristics

Roadless area characteristics, as established by the 2001 Roadless Rule, are resources or features that are often present in and characterize inventoried roadless areas. These characteristics are utilized by the Forest Service in evaluating roadless area project proposals.

The State of Alaska's advisory committee provided the Governor with its own Alaska-specific perspective of roadless area characteristics by further elaborating on the unique social and cultural context, rich habitat, scenic quality, and economic importance of Alaska roadless areas. The State Advisory Committee's elaboration of the unique social and cultural context, rich habitat, scenic quality, and economic importance of Alaska roadless areas provides important context for considering local perspective for this rulemaking. The Department appreciates the thoughtful process undertaken by the State's Advisory Committee and is proposing a new definition after consideration of the State's input and the Forest Service's own reflection of roadless characteristics.



Characteristic	Description
Physical Environment	Roadless areas provide high-quality or undisturbed soil, water, and air.
Water	Roadless areas provide a variety of water resources including public drinking water sources, fish and aquatic resources, and hatchery aquatic resources.
Diversity	Roadless areas support a diversity of plant and animal communities including stands of old-growth forests.
Habitat	Roadless areas are expansive areas where high-quality intact habitat exists and ecosystems function with all their native species and components. Roadless areas serve as habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and for those species dependent on large, undisturbed areas of land.
Remoteness	Roadless areas provide economic opportunity due to rich primitive, semi-primitive motorized, and semi-primitive non-motorized classes of dispersed recreation.
Landscape	Roadless areas provide reference landscapes of relatively undisturbed areas that serve as a barometer to measure the effects of development on other parts of the landscape.
Scenery	Roadless areas have natural-appearing landscapes with high-scenic qualities that people value.
Cultural	Roadless areas are rich in traditional cultural properties and sacred sites. In Alaska indigenous peoples have been on national forests for more than 10,000 years and the forests have cultural significance.
Locally-Unique Characteristics	Roadless areas represent geographic areas with additional locally-unique characteristics specific to Alaska including: (a) important source of subsistence resources including terrestrial wildlife, waterfowl, mammals, fish, and plant-based resources; (b) rich habitat that supports multiple species of fish for personal, subsistence, sport, recreation, and commercial harvest; and (c) supports diverse economic opportunity that is especially important for rural community well-being.

DRAFT Alaska Roadless Area Land Management Categories (AKRA)

Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 6 provide a variety of management approaches within roadless areas through land management categories which include Land Use Designation (LUD) II Priority, Watershed Priority, Community Use Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority. The management categories prohibit timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction with a range of exceptions applied differentially across the alternatives.



Land Management Category	Alternatives Applied	Description
LUD II Priority	2, 4, 6	<p>The LUD II Priority category would reduce confusion by eliminating overlapping statutory and roadless regulatory management direction and manage these areas only in accordance with the statutory direction. These lands will be managed in a roadless state to retain their wildland character as defined in the TTRA (Title II, Section 201) and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291, 128 Stat. 3729, Section 3720(e)(4)).</p> <p>Approximately 870,000 acres of the Tongass are congressionally designated as LUD II (826,000 acres currently are additionally designated as IRA under the 2001 Roadless Rule and 44,000 acres currently not designated as IRA). Alternatives 2 and 4 propose to designate all of the congressionally designated LUD II acres as LUD II Priority AKRAs. Alternative 6 proposes to apply the LUD II Priority category only to LUD II areas that are currently designated as IRA.</p> <p>Notably, Alternative 3 proposes to remove all LUD II areas from roadless designation rather than designating an AKRA category. LUD II areas under Alternative 3 would continue to be managed under their congressional designations.</p>
Watershed Priority	2, 3	<p>The Watershed Priority category is more protective than the 2001 Roadless Rule as it offers fewer exceptions for timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction. It also provides for activities specific to aquatic habitat improvement. Approximately 3,250,000 acres in Alternative 2 whilst 3,208,000 acres in Alternative 3 would be managed under this management category. The Watershed Priority category is applied to areas identified in the 2016 Forest Plan as Tongass 77 (T77) Watersheds and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. Additionally, for Alternative 3, commercial old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited on National Forest System lands in T77 and TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas including those that extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.</p>
Community Use Priority	3	<p>The Community Use Priority category allows for small-scale timber harvest and associated road construction and reconstruction. In addition, it allows for infrastructure development to connect and support local communities and traditional Alaska Native cultural uses. In all cases, activities within Community Use Priority AKRAs would have to be consistent with the underlying Forest Plan LUD requirements. This is to say that even if a timber harvest, road building, or other activity would be permissible under the Alaska Roadless Rule, it may not be allowable because of Forest Plan requirements specific to the LUD that applies to the area. This management category applies to approximately 241,000 acres and is only proposed in Alternative 3 adjacent to five communities: Sitka, Wrangell, Juneau, Ketchikan, and Yakutat. However, based on cooperating agency input, the Community Use Priority should have also been applied around the communities of Hydaburg and Kake and will be accommodated in the FEIS.</p> <p>This management category was developed to address specific desires of some communities to retain roadless protections while allowing for small timber operators in the community, infrastructure development to support the communities, and provide for traditional Alaska Native cultural uses. The Forest Service is seeking public input on this management category, specifically with respect to whether this designation should be applied to other communities/areas. The Forest Service proposes to consider applying the Community Use Priority land management category to AKRAs either adjacent to communities or within community use areas as requested by non-profit community associations organized under State of Alaska law (Alaska Statute 10.20.005), municipal governments, or tribal governments.</p>
Roadless Priority	2, 3, 4, 6	<p>The Roadless Priority management category is similar to the 2001 Roadless Rule but is less restrictive and addresses Alaska-specific concerns. Specifically, it expressly provides for infrastructure development to connect and support local communities, and road construction/reconstruction for access to renewable energy and leasable minerals. The leasable minerals exception provides for roading associated with geothermal, oil, gas, and/or coal development. In addition, the Roadless Priority category includes specific exceptions that, while they are already allowed under the 2001 Roadless Rule, are included to improve overall clarity.</p>
Timber Priority	4	<p>The Timber Priority category allows timber harvest, road construction, and road reconstruction to facilitate timber management and provide economic opportunity. This management category applies to approximately 856,000 acres and is only proposed in Alternative 4.</p>



Alternative	Priority Use Areas	Description
1 No Action	Not Applicable	<p>Alternative 1 is the no action alternative as required by NEPA and reflects a continuation of current land management pursuant to the 2001 Roadless Rule (see Map 1 in map packet or on CD). This alternative continues general prohibitions on tree harvest (and sale), road construction, and road reconstruction within IRAs with limited exceptions (Table 2-2).</p> <p>Under Alternative 1, roadless areas consist of 110 IRAs identified in the 2001 Roadless Rule. These IRAs were originally mapped in 1996 for the Tongass Forest Plan Revision and the provisions of the 2001 Roadless Rule (as provided for by the Court’s reinstatement Order) would apply to those IRAs (summarized below). As a result of ownership changes and boundary alignment corrections these IRAs currently encompass 9.2 million acres¹ of NFS land. Provisions of the 2001 Roadless Rule remain intact across the 110 IRAs, encompassing approximately 55 percent of the Tongass National Forest.</p> <p>Under Alternative 1, IRA boundary modifications would continue to require rulemaking except for minor administrative corrections.</p>
2 Roadless	LUD II Watershed Roadless	<p>Alternative 2 provides limited additional timber harvest opportunity while maximizing roadless area protections. It removes approximately 113,000 acres from roadless designation that have been substantially altered as identified by known prior road construction or timber harvest. These areas are generally known as “roadless” areas but also include additional areas considered to be substantially altered. Removed areas include both development and non-development LUDs. Alternative 2 also maximizes the geographic scope of roadless area protection by adding 133,000 acres as AKRAs.</p> <p>The 133,000 acres of added roadless areas include portions of congressionally-designated LUD II areas not included as IRAs under the 2001 Roadless Rule, currently unroaded small islands, and unroaded areas greater than 5,000 acres as identified by prior forest planning efforts. Adding additional roadless protections to unroaded islands provides for long-term, continued recreational and outfitter and guide opportunities on these islands.</p> <p>After removals and additions, Alternative 2 consists of 9.22 million inventoried roadless acres or about 20,000 more roadless acres than under Alternative 1. The 9.22 million acres are designated to three AKRA land management categories: LUD II Priority, Watershed Priority, and Roadless Priority (see Map 2 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>Alternative 2 applies the most protective AKRA category, Watershed Priority, to 3.25 million acres, primarily identified as T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas in the Forest Plan. The Watershed Priority category is considered most protective because it includes fewer exceptions than the 2001 Roadless Rule, while still allowing activities needed for watershed protection, maintenance, or improvement.</p> <p>Alternative 2 converts a net total of 18,000 old-growth forest acres and 10,000 young-growth acres, previously identified as unsuitable for timber harvest, to suitable.</p>
3 Logical Extension (Preferred)	Watershed Roadless Community Use	<p>Alternative 3 is one of two preferred alternatives and provides moderate additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining substantial roadless area protections. Alternative 3 maintains roadless protections for T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas inside roadless areas and also prohibits old-growth commercial harvest in these areas outside of roadless areas (similar to the Forest Plan). Additional timber harvest opportunity is provided by removing substantially-altered roadless areas (including roadless, similar to Alternative 2) and extending the bounds of these areas to logical end points of existing road and timber harvest systems (about 212,000 acres), generally defined as the nearest watershed boundary (i.e., ridgeline of 14th-field hydrologic unit) from an existing road system. Removing these areas from the roadless inventory represents the logical extensions of substantially altered acres from existing infrastructure and likely encompasses the more economically feasible locations for future timber harvest with the least impact to roadless characteristics. Additional timber harvest opportunity is provided by designation of Community Use Priority AKRAs around five communities, namely Yakutat, Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Wrangell.</p> <p>Alternative 3 removes approximately 1.2 million acres from roadless designation including both development and non-development LUD acres. Alternative 3 also adds 105,000 acres to AKRAs as Roadless Priority including unroaded small islands and unroaded areas greater than 5,000 acres as identified by prior forest planning efforts. Adding additional roadless protections to unroaded islands provides for long-term, continued recreational and outfitter and guide opportunities on these islands.</p> <p>Alternative 3 applies the most protective AKRA category, Watershed Priority, to 3.21 million acres identified as T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. The Watershed Priority category is considered most protective because it includes fewer exceptions than the 2001 Roadless Rule, while still allowing activities needed for watershed protection, maintenance, or improvement. Additionally, for Alternative 3, commercial old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited on National Forest System lands in T77 and TNC/Audubon Conservation Areas including those that extend beyond Alaska Roadless Area boundaries.</p> <p>The remaining roadless areas include 4.65 million acres in Roadless Priority and 0.24 million acres in Community Use Priority (see Map 3 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>Alternative 3 proposes a net decrease of 1.1 million roadless acres, as compared to the no action alternative, and includes both development and non-development LUDs. Roadless area designation would be removed from the 826,000 congressionally-designated LUD II acres that are currently within an</p>

		<p>inventoried roadless area. The removal of roadless designation from congressionally-designated LUD II acres represents the majority of the decrease in roadless acres proposed under Alternative 3. Removing roadless designation from LUD II acres retains the congressional mandate for LUD II areas and assures the lands will be managed “in a roadless state to retain their wildland character” as provided for in the 1986 and 1979 plans.</p> <p>Alternative 3 would convert a net of 76,000 old-growth acres and 14,000 young-growth acres, previously identified as unsuitable timber lands, to suitable timber lands.</p> <p>Additional Protections Note - T77 Watersheds and TNC Audubon Conservation Priority Areas: Watershed protection is a key element of roadless management. Watersheds are highly valued sources of municipal drinking water, support fisheries and wildlife habitat, and can act as keystones for economic activities. In Alternative 3, areas identified in the 2016 Tongass Forest Plan as T77 watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas (high-priority watershed areas) outside of inventoried roadless areas would be afforded added protection through the roadless regulation. Specifically, old-growth timber harvest would be prohibited within these areas, subject to the described exceptions. A prohibition on old-growth harvesting currently exists through the Forest Plan. But Alternative 3 establishes regulatory continuity between these roadless and watershed management systems given how extensively they overlap (the listed watersheds comprise over half of the Tongass’ roadless areas, and approximately 90 percent of the watershed areas are currently within roadless area boundaries). Thus, the old-growth harvest prohibition would be extended beyond the designated roadless area boundaries in order to maintain the balance and integrity of the watershed protection system. As with all roadless rule provisions, the new prohibition would supersede the current and future forest plans, with the plan continuing to provide management direction in other regards. In this manner, Alternative 3 affords high-priority watershed areas greater protection than under the 2001 Roadless Rule. Young-growth commercial timber harvest outside of AKRAs within these high-priority watershed areas is not prohibited. This would apply to about 377,000 acres outside of roadless areas.</p>
4 Partial Development LUDs (Preferred)	LUD II Roadless Timber	<p>Alternative 4 is one of two preferred alternatives and provides significant additional timber harvest opportunity while maintaining roadless protections for Scenic Viewsheds LUDs and T77/TNC-Audubon Conservation Priority Areas that are in roadless areas. Approximately 375,000 acres are removed from roadless designation, including substantially-altered areas and logical extensions of substantially-altered acres (similar to Alternatives 2 and 3), along with selected additional locations for potentially feasible economic timber sales. These acres are also converted from unsuitable to suitable timber lands, resulting in significant additional timber harvest opportunity. Protection is maintained for Scenic Viewsheds, and most T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas by designating them as Roadless Priority category AKRAs.</p> <p>Additionally, Alternative 4 adds 32,000 acres to AKRA as LUD II Priority category. These added roadless acres are LUD II areas that were not designated as roadless under the 2001 Roadless Rule. No additional lands would be added to AKRAs.</p> <p>The net result of removals and additions under Alternative 4 is 8.86 million roadless acres, which are designated into three categories of AKRAs: LUD II Priority, Roadless Priority, and Timber Priority (see Map 4 in map packet or on CD). This alternative was developed to provide for a high level of timber management opportunities thus, timber management is permitted in the Timber Priority category, which consists of the Timber Production and Modified Landscape LUDs, as identified in the Forest Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 4 proposes a net decrease of 343,000 roadless acres as compared to the no action alternative. However, the total net decrease is substantially higher when also including Timber Priority category acres, yielding a combined decrease of 1.09 million total acres.</p> <p>Alternative 4 converts a net of 158,000 old-growth acres and 15,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>
5 Full Exemption	Not Applicable	<p>Alternative 5 provides maximum additional timber harvest opportunity and is the full exemption alternative, which was requested by the State of Alaska’s petition (Appendix A). It removes all 9.20 million inventoried roadless acres on the Tongass from roadless protection (see Map 5 in map packet or on CD). Acres removed from roadless protection would continue to be managed by other applicable statutes, regulations, and the Forest Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 5 would add the following provision into the “Scope and Applicability” section of the 2001 Roadless Rule: “This subpart does not apply to road construction, road reconstruction, or the cutting, sale, or removal of timber in inventoried roadless areas on the Tongass National Forest.”</p> <p>Alternative 5 also converts a net total of 165,000 old-growth acres and 20,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>
6 All Development LUDs	LUD II Roadless	<p>Alternative 6 provides maximum additional timber harvest opportunity by removing roadless protections from all Timber Development, Modified Landscape, and Scenic Viewshed LUDs identified by the Forest Plan, including T77 Watersheds and TNC/Audubon Conservation Priority Areas within the aforementioned development LUDs. Areas with mineral potential, as identified by the Forest Plan’s minerals overlay, are also removed from roadless protection (see Map 6 in map packet or on CD).</p> <p>In total, 2.30 million acres would be removed from roadless area protection including mineral overlay acres and the majority of development LUDs, including conservation-designated acres. The remaining 6.91 million roadless acres are designated to two AKRA land management categories: Roadless Priority and LUD II Priority (see Map 6 in map packet or on CD). Alternative 6 also converts a net total of 165,000 old-growth acres and 17,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands.</p>

Roadless Areas by Alternative and Management Category

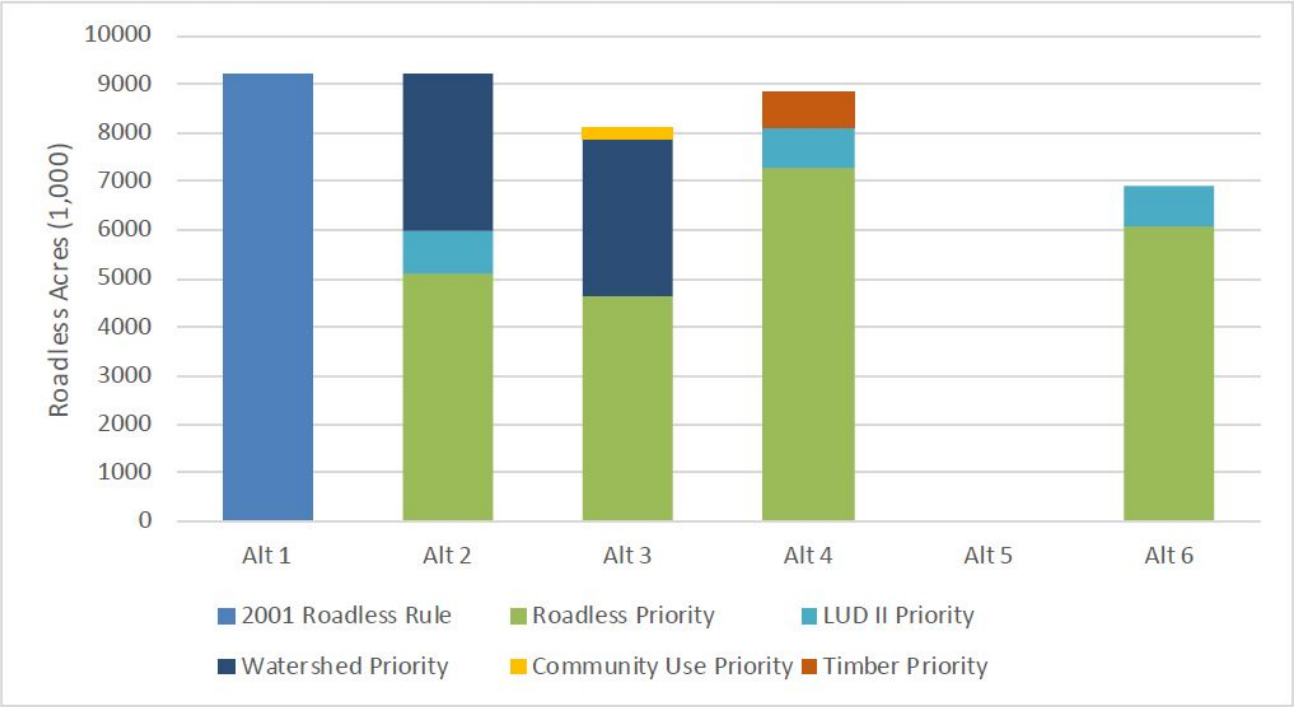
Roadless Category (acres)	Alternative					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No Action	Roaded Roadless	Logical Extension	Partial Dev. LUDs ¹	Full Exemption	All Dev. LUDs
Total Roadless Area	9,200,000	9,220,000	8,103,000	8,857,000	0	6,905,000
AKRA Management Categories						
Roadless Priority	N/A	5,114,000	4,653,000	7,252,000	0	6,078,000
LUD II Priority	N/A	856,000	0	856,000	0	828,000
Watershed Priority	N/A	3,250,000	3,208,000	0	0	0
Community Use Priority	N/A	0	241,000	0	0	0
Timber Priority	N/A	0	0	749,000	0	0
Change in Roadless Area Acres						
Roadless Area Removed	0	113,000	1,202,000	375,000	9,200,000	2,298,000
Roadless Area Added	0	133,000	105,000	32,000	0	3,000
Net Change	0	20,000	-1,098,000	-343,000	-9,200,000	-2,295,000
Old-Growth Acres Suitable for Harvest						
Total Acres	230,000	247,000	305,000	388,000	395,000	395,000
Net Change	0	18,000	76,000	158,000	165,000	165,000
T77 & TNC/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas Outside of Roadless given Long-term Protection						
Total Acres	0	0	377,000	0	0	0
Potentially Suitable Old Growth Acres	0	0	49,000 ²	0	0	0

N/A = not applicable

¹ Includes Timber Production and Modified Landscape LUDs, but not Scenic View shed.

² Includes old growth that would be suitable except for prohibition on old-growth harvests in Tongass 77 (T77) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas. Overall, there are 171,000 acres of old growth within T77 and TNC/ Audubon Conservation Priority Areas outside of roadless areas.

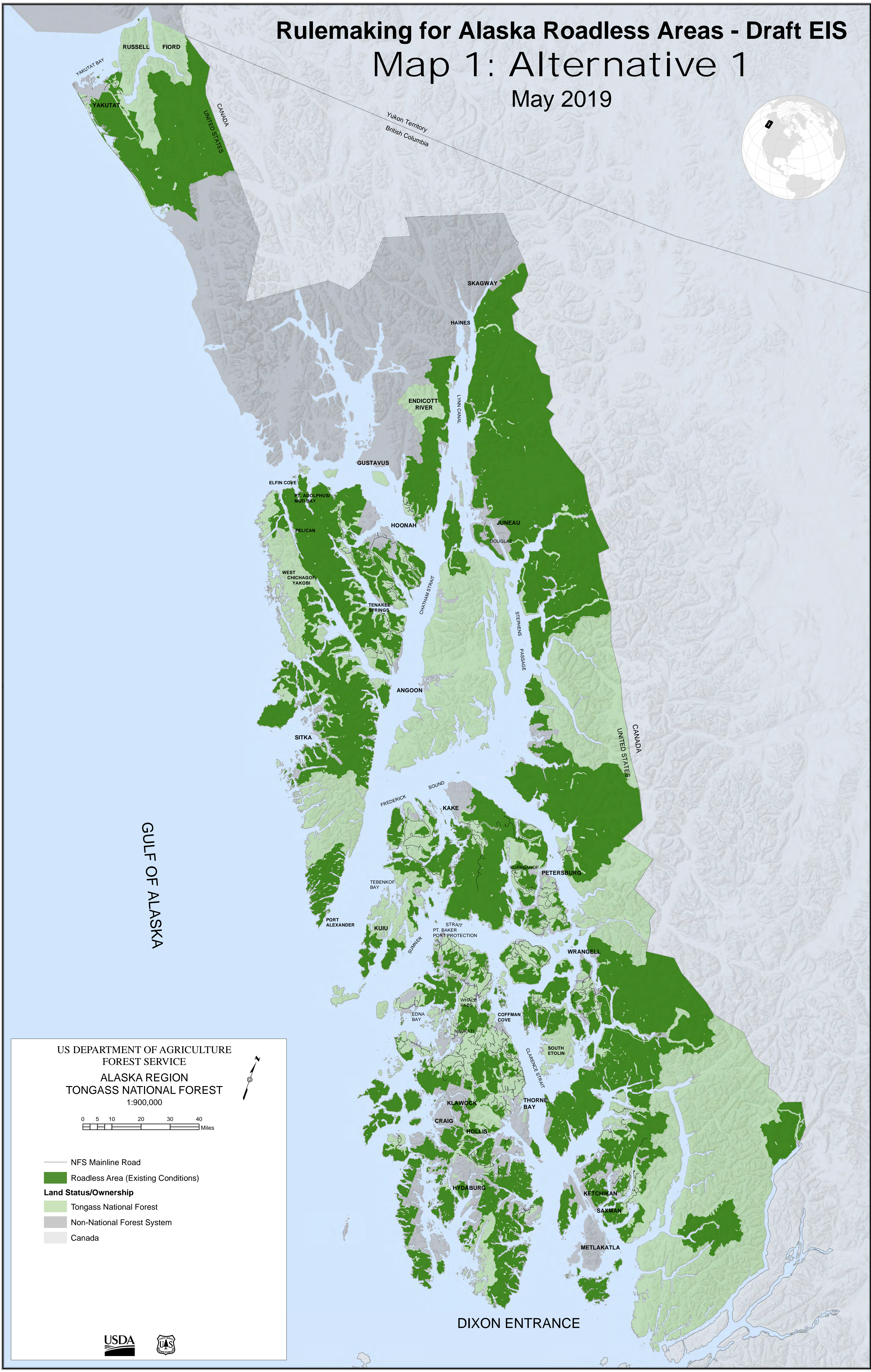
Roadless Areas by Alternative and Management Category



Rulemaking for Alaska Roadless Areas - Draft EIS

Map 1: Alternative 1

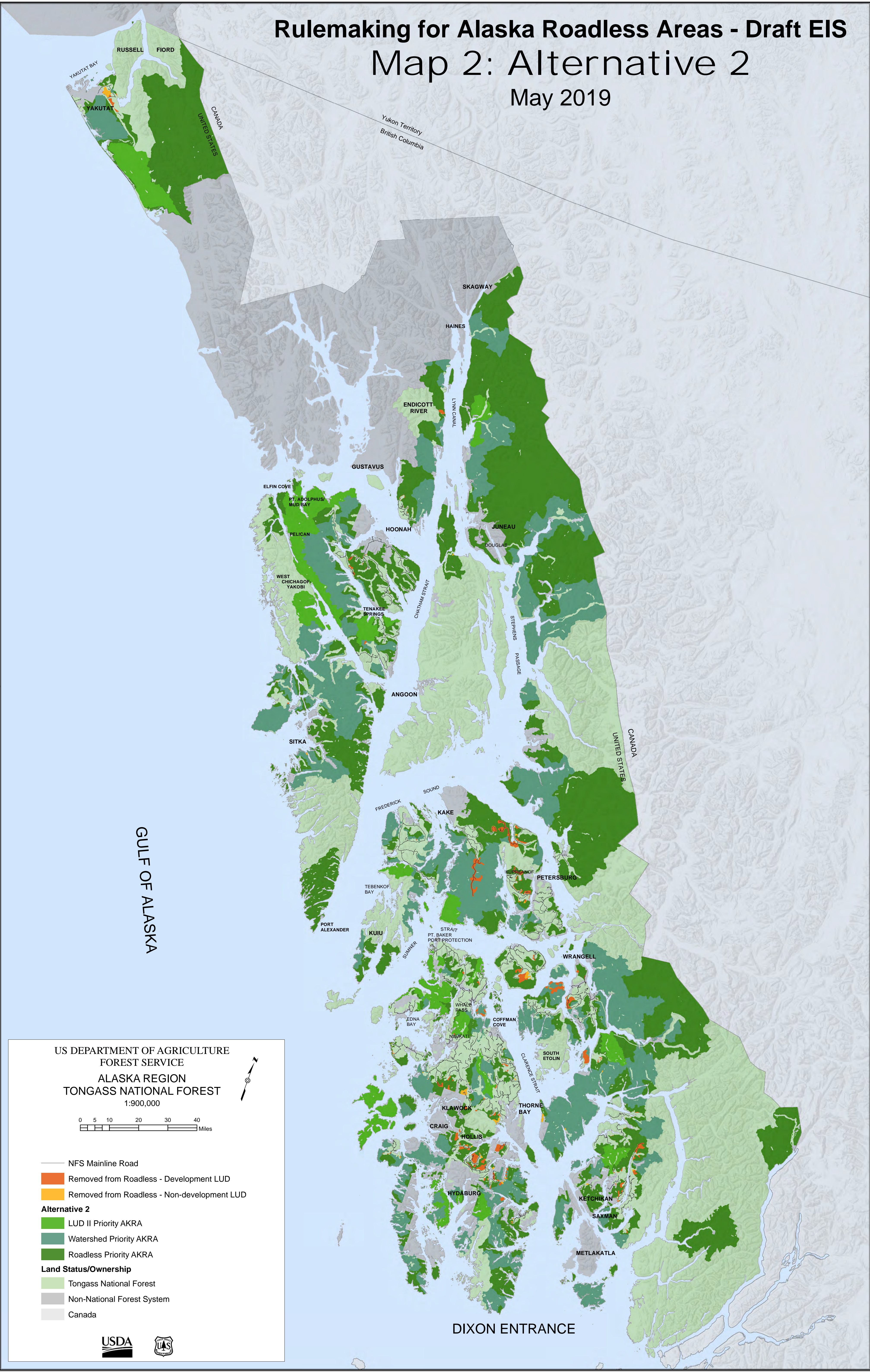
May 2019



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Map 2: Alternative 2

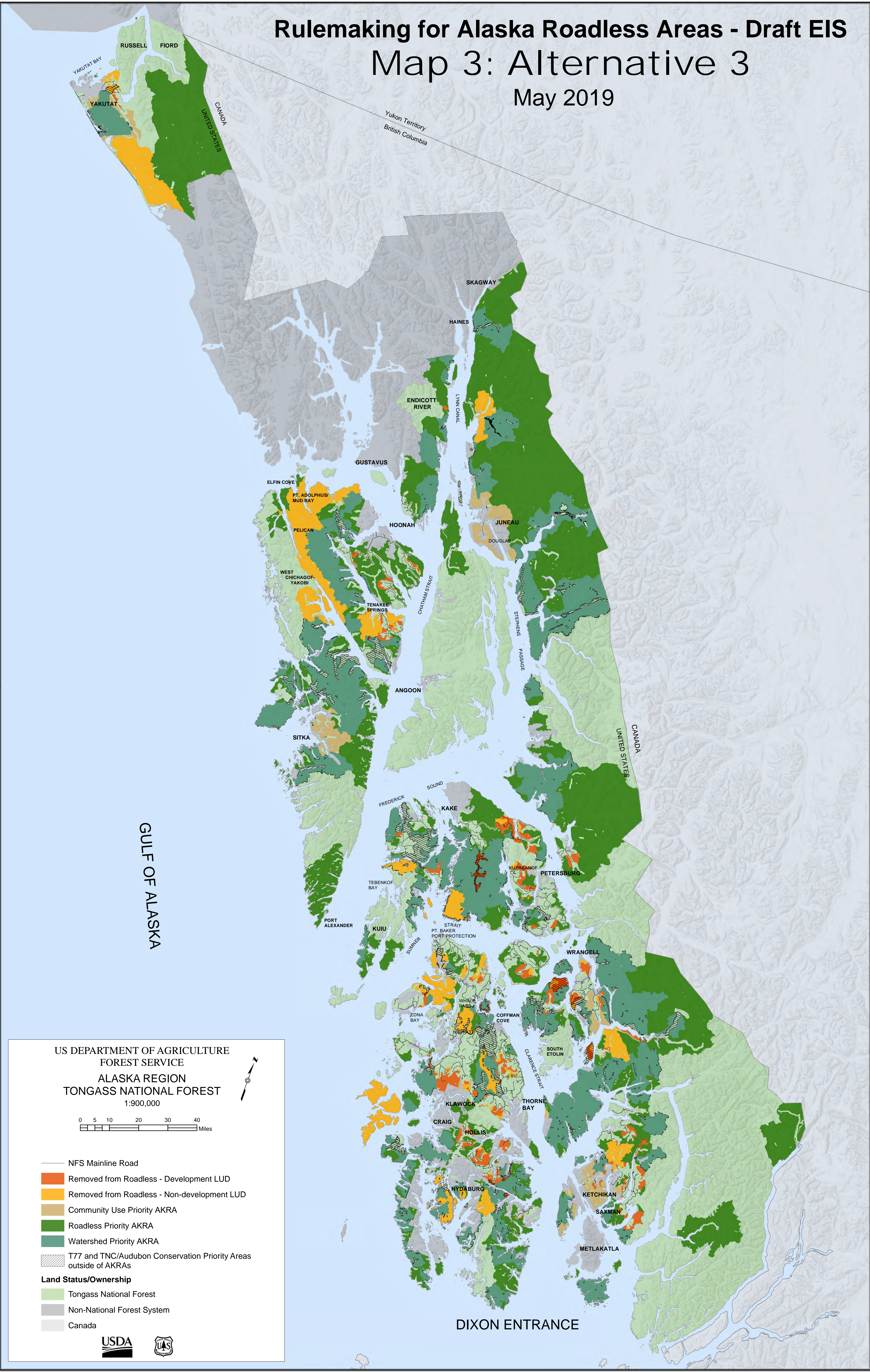
May 2019



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Map 3: Alternative 3

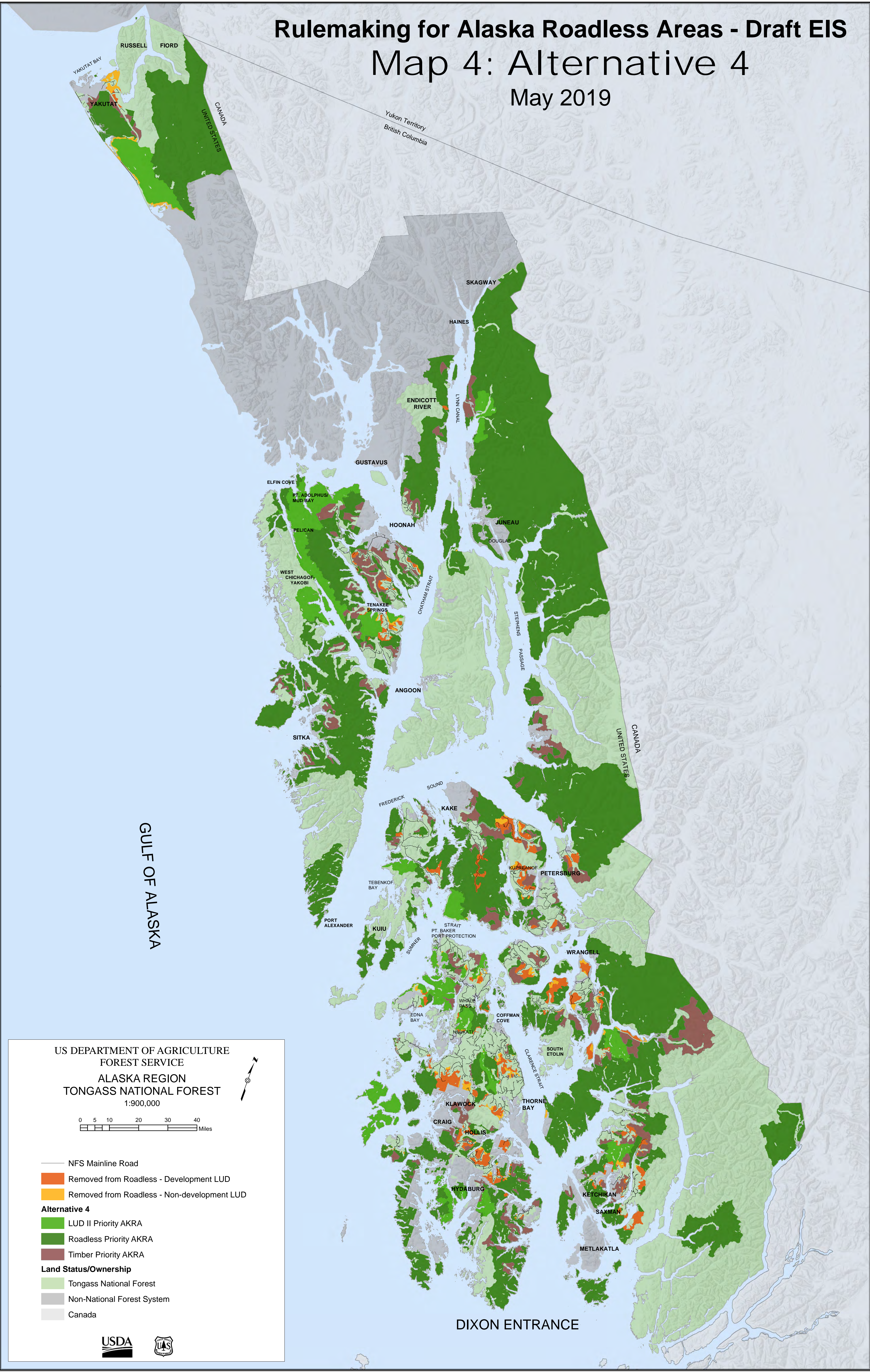
May 2019



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Map 4: Alternative 4

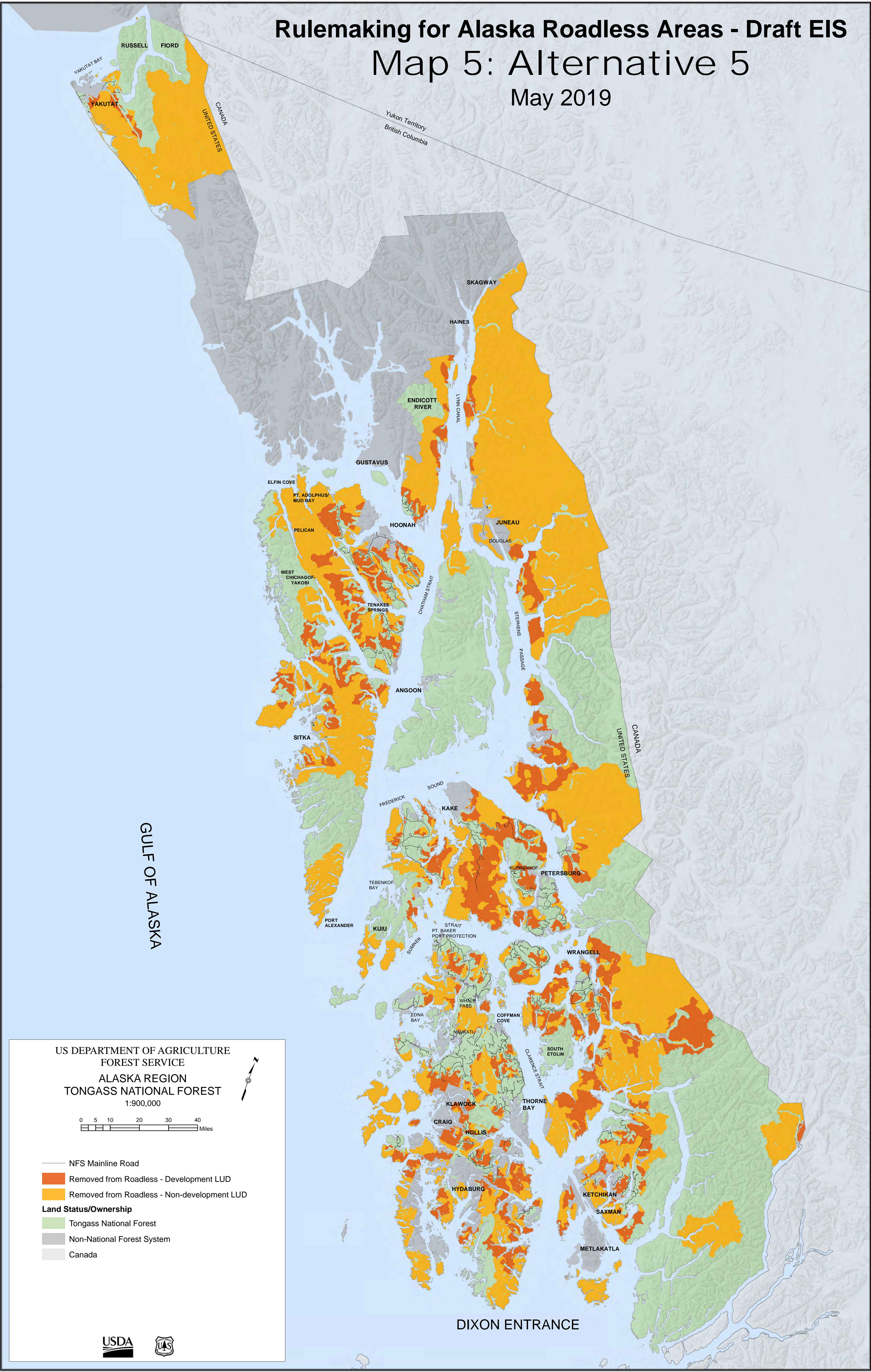
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Map 5: Alternative 5

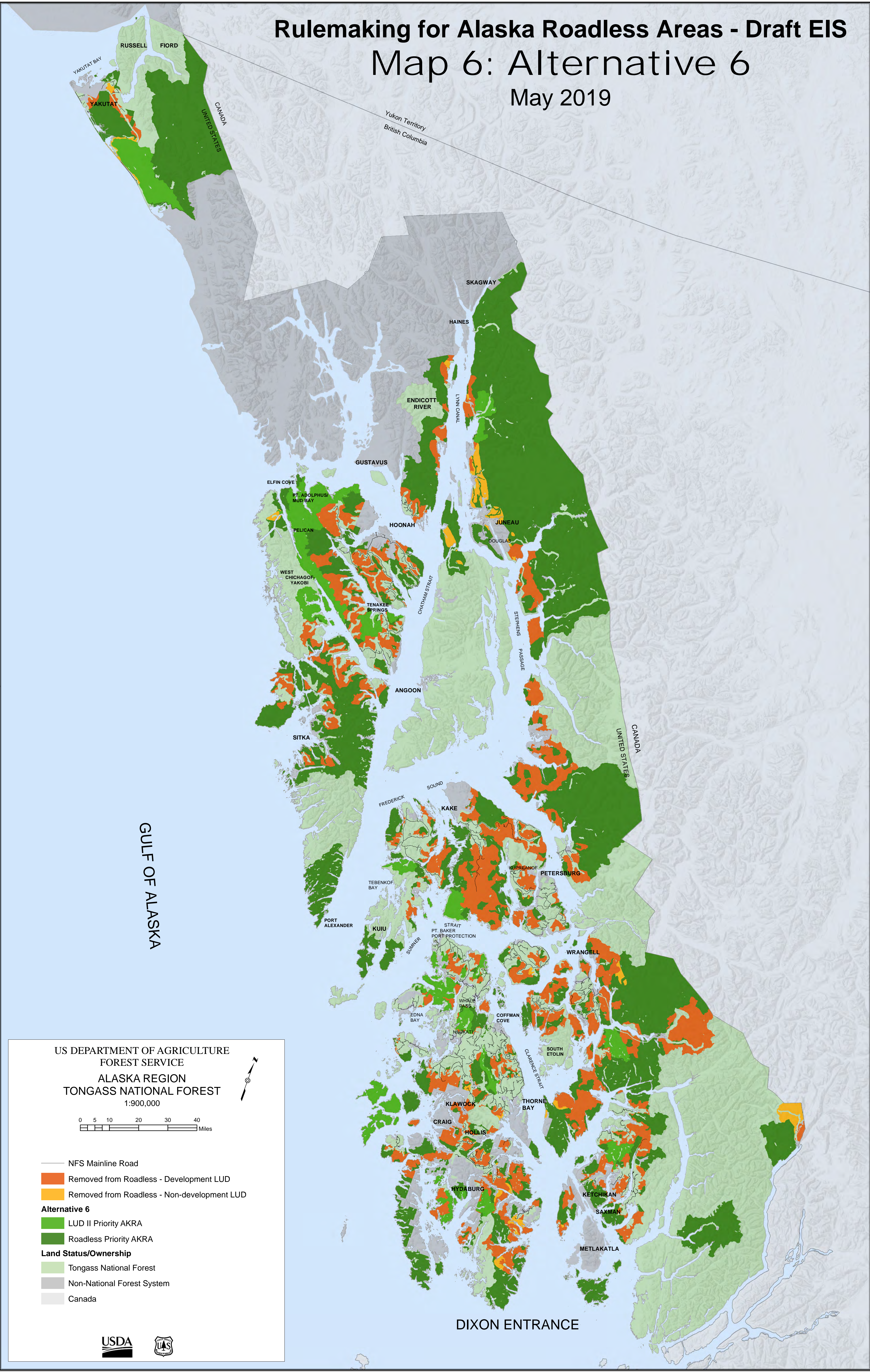
May 2019



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Map 6: Alternative 6

May 2019





File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Albert Howard
Angoon Community Association
P.O. Box 328
Angoon, AK 99820

Dear President Howard:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Peterson
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
320 West Willoughby Avenue, Suite 300
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President Peterson:

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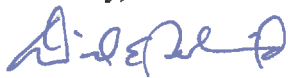
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Larry Evanoff
Chenega Bay IRA Council
P.O. Box 8079
Chenega Bay, AK 99574

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Traditional Chief Gary Harrison
Chickaloon Village
P.O. Box 1105
Chickaloon, AK 99674

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

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How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Kimberly Strong
Chilkat Indian Village
HC60 Box 2207
Haines, AK 99827

Dear President Strong:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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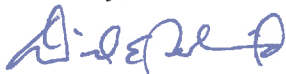
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Les Katzeek
Chilkoot Indian Association
P.O. Box 490
Haines, AK 99827

Dear President Katzeek:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Clinton E. Cook Sr.
Craig Tribal Association
P.O. Box 828
Craig, AK 99921

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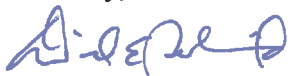
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DAVID E. SCHMID
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Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Clarence Laiti
Douglas Indian Association
811 W. 12th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President Laiti:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Grace Villarreal
Hoonah Indian Association
P.O. Box 602
Hoonah, AK 99829

Dear President Villarreal:

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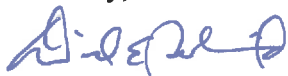
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Sidney Edenshaw
Hydaburg Cooperative Association
#1 Main Street
Hydaburg, AK 99922

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
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Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Executive Director Bart Garber
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Executive Director Garber:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Gianna Flanery
Ketchikan Indian Community
2960 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear President Flanery:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President A. Webster Demmert
Klawock Cooperative Association
P.O. Box 430
Klawock, AK 99925

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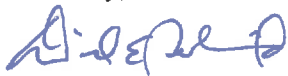
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DAVID E. SCHMID
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Mike Tucker
Knik Tribal Council
P.O. Box 871565
Wasilla, AK 99687-1565

Dear President Tucker:

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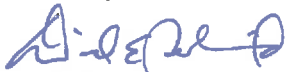
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Mayor Karl Cook
Metlakatla Indian Community
P.O. Box 8
Metlakatla, AK 99926

Dear Mayor Cook:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Aaron Leggett
Native Village of Eklutna
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, AK 99567

Dear President Leggett:

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Darrel Olsen
Native Village of Eyak
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear President Olsen:

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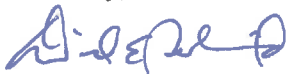
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President David Totemoff Sr.
Native Village of Tatitlek
P.O. Box 171
Tatitlek, AK 99677

Dear President Totemoff:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Alfred Goozmer
Native Village of Tyonek
P.O. Box 82009
Tyonek, AK 99682

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Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

When and Where Was the Roadless Rule In Effect in Alaska? The Roadless Rule was adopted in January 2001, but due to litigation did not become effective and operational until April 2003. After three months of being in effect on the Chugach NF and Tongass NF, the Roadless Rule was again judicially enjoined on a nationwide basis and was not operational for the next three years. In September 2006, the Roadless Rule was judicially reinstated and became operational on the Chugach NF, but the Tongass NF remained exempt from the Rule because USDA had issued a temporary rule in 2003 exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule while it examined whether a state-wide exemption was appropriate. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska set aside the 2003 Tongass Exemption and reinstated the Roadless Rule (with special instructions) on the Tongass National Forest. The District Court's ruling was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Supreme Court declined further review.

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

The State of Alaska will work closely with the USDA Forest Service. The State will establish a task force reporting to the Governor concerning options for roadless management that will inform the USDA's consideration of the State's Petition for rulemaking. The rulemaking will be analyzed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

What is the timeframe for completion of an Alaska-specific roadless rule?

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How are Tribal Governments designated as a cooperating agency?

If a Tribal Government decides to accept the Regional Forester's invitation to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking process, they should provide a written reply to the Regional Forester accepting the invitation. A memorandum of understanding will then be developed to establish specific responsibilities of the Forest Service and Tribal Government.

What are the responsibilities of a cooperating agency?

- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
- Participate in the public involvement processes, which help define and frame the issues to be addressed in the EIS.
- Review information and analyses (upon request from the Forest Service) for which the Tribal Government has special expertise.
- Contribute staff support and other resources at the Forest Service's request to enhance the NEPA team's capability.
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What authority does a cooperating agency provide?

Becoming a cooperating agency does not provide any new authority to a Tribal Government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service retain exclusive authority over the decisions related to the Alaska Roadless Rule.

When would this rulemaking take place and how much time would it take?

This rulemaking effort would begin as soon as possible and is estimated to be completed by June 2020. Meetings with cooperating agencies would be concentrated around milestones in the rulemaking/analysis process, which are likely to include: pre-scoping (August 2018); issue identification/alternative development (November 2018 to January 2019); post-comment period (November 2019 to January 2020); and final rule roll-out (May 2020). These times are initial estimates just to provide a sense of time commitment and could vary widely.

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For additional information on cooperating agency status, roles, or responsibilities, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, at 907-586-7089 or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.





File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

First Chief John Kvasnikoff
Nanwalek IRA Council
P.O. Box 8028
Nanwalek, AK 99603

Dear First Chief Kvasnikoff:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

Both the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations encourage agency cooperation early in the environmental review process to help inform the analysis and establish a mechanism for active intergovernmental communication. Cooperating agency status under NEPA is determined under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) requirements for cooperating agency status (40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The CEQ regulations addressing cooperating agencies status (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5) implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analyses and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments" and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 U.S.C. §§ 4331(a), 4332(2)). The NFMA planning regulations (36 C.F.R. § 219.4(a)(1)(iv)(v)) provide direction to Forest Service responsible officials to encourage Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status where appropriate.



Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
- 4) Provide timely review and comment on the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to reflect your views and concerns on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts.

Cooperating agencies are expected to provide their own funding to support their participation in this process.


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Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Encelewski
Ninilchik Traditional Council
P.O. Box 39070
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear President Encelewski:

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Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Casimero Aceveda Jr.
Organized Village of Kake
P.O. Box 316
Kake, AK 99830

Dear President Aceveda:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Frederick Olson Jr.
Organized Village of Kasaan
P.O. Box 26-Kasaan
Ketchikan, AK 99950

Dear President Olson:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
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Enclosures: (2)

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Lee Wallace
Organized Village of Saxman
Route 2, Box 2, Saxman
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear President Wallace:

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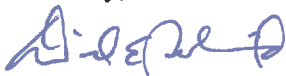
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Barry Morrison
Petersburg Indian Association
P.O. Box 1418
Petersburg, AK 99833

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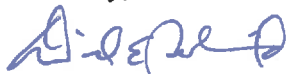
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Chief Patrick Norman
Port Graham Village Council
P.O. Box 5510
Port Graham, AK 99603

Dear Chief Norman:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
- 4) Provide timely review and comment on the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to reflect your views and concerns on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts.

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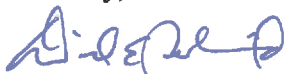
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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Crystal Collier
Seldovia Village Tribe
P.O. Box L
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear President Collier:

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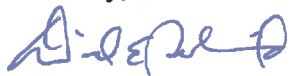
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Chairman KathyHope Erickson
Sitka Tribe of Alaska
456 Katlian Street
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Chairman Erickson:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Jamie Bricker
Skagway Traditional Council
P.O. Box 1157
Skagway, AK 99840

Dear President Bricker:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
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- 4) Provide timely review and comment on the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to reflect your views and concerns on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts.

Cooperating agencies are expected to provide their own funding to support their participation in this process.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Penny Carty
Village of Salamattoff
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear President Carty:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Oliver
Wrangell Cooperative Association
P.O. Box 2021
Wrangell, AK 99929

Dear President Oliver:

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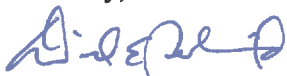
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Victoria Demmert
Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
P.O. Box 418
Yakutat, AK 99689

Dear President Demmert:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
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Cooperating agencies are expected to provide their own funding to support their participation in this process.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

When and Where Was the Roadless Rule In Effect in Alaska? The Roadless Rule was adopted in January 2001, but due to litigation did not become effective and operational until April 2003. After three months of being in effect on the Chugach NF and Tongass NF, the Roadless Rule was again judicially enjoined on a nationwide basis and was not operational for the next three years. In September 2006, the Roadless Rule was judicially reinstated and became operational on the Chugach NF, but the Tongass NF remained exempt from the Rule because USDA had issued a temporary rule in 2003 exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule while it examined whether a state-wide exemption was appropriate. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska set aside the 2003 Tongass Exemption and reinstated the Roadless Rule (with special instructions) on the Tongass National Forest. The District Court's ruling was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Supreme Court declined further review.

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

The State of Alaska will work closely with the USDA Forest Service. The State will establish a task force reporting to the Governor concerning options for roadless management that will inform the USDA's consideration of the State's Petition for rulemaking. The rulemaking will be analyzed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

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ALASKA ROADLESS RULE COOPERATING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES (July 26, 2018)

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If a Tribal Government decides to accept the Regional Forester's invitation to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking process, they should provide a written reply to the Regional Forester accepting the invitation. A memorandum of understanding will then be developed to establish specific responsibilities of the Forest Service and Tribal Government.

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Albert Howard
Angoon Community Association
P.O. Box 328
Angoon, AK 99820

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Peterson
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
320 West Willoughby Avenue, Suite 300
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President Peterson:

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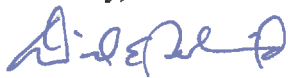
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Chenega Bay IRA Council
P.O. Box 8079
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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Traditional Chief Gary Harrison
Chickaloon Village
P.O. Box 1105
Chickaloon, AK 99674

Dear Chief Harrison:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Kimberly Strong
Chilkat Indian Village
HC60 Box 2207
Haines, AK 99827

Dear President Strong:

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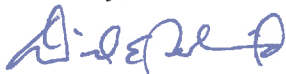
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Les Katzeek
Chilkoot Indian Association
P.O. Box 490
Haines, AK 99827

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Clinton E. Cook Sr.
Craig Tribal Association
P.O. Box 828
Craig, AK 99921

Dear President Cook:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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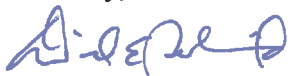
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Clarence Laiti
Douglas Indian Association
811 W. 12th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President Laiti:

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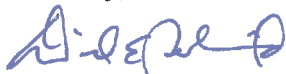
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Grace Villarreal
Hoonah Indian Association
P.O. Box 602
Hoonah, AK 99829

Dear President Villarreal:

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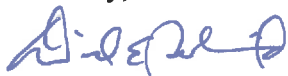
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DAVID E. SCHMID
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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

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How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Sidney Edenshaw
Hydaburg Cooperative Association
#1 Main Street
Hydaburg, AK 99922

Dear President Edenshaw:

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Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Executive Director Bart Garber
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Executive Director Garber:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Gianna Flanery
Ketchikan Indian Community
2960 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear President Flanery:

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DAVID E. SCHMID
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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

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How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
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This rulemaking effort would begin as soon as possible and is estimated to be completed by June 2020. Meetings with cooperating agencies would be concentrated around milestones in the rulemaking/analysis process, which are likely to include: pre-scoping (August 2018); issue identification/alternative development (November 2018 to January 2019); post-comment period (November 2019 to January 2020); and final rule roll-out (May 2020). These times are initial estimates just to provide a sense of time commitment and could vary widely.

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President A. Webster Demmert
Klawock Cooperative Association
P.O. Box 430
Klawock, AK 99925

Dear President Demmert:

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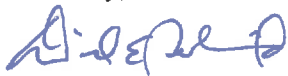
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Mike Tucker
Knik Tribal Council
P.O. Box 871565
Wasilla, AK 99687-1565

Dear President Tucker:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Mayor Karl Cook
Metlakatla Indian Community
P.O. Box 8
Metlakatla, AK 99926

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

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How are Tribal Governments designated as a cooperating agency?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Aaron Leggett
Native Village of Eklutna
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, AK 99567

Dear President Leggett:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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Both the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations encourage agency cooperation early in the environmental review process to help inform the analysis and establish a mechanism for active intergovernmental communication. Cooperating agency status under NEPA is determined under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) requirements for cooperating agency status (40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The CEQ regulations addressing cooperating agencies status (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5) implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analyses and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments" and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 U.S.C. §§ 4331(a), 4332(2)). The NFMA planning regulations (36 C.F.R. § 219.4(a)(1)(iv)(v)) provide direction to Forest Service responsible officials to encourage Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status where appropriate.



Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Darrel Olsen
Native Village of Eyak
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear President Olsen:

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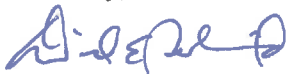
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President David Totemoff Sr.
Native Village of Tatitlek
P.O. Box 171
Tatitlek, AK 99677

Dear President Totemoff:

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When and Where Was the Roadless Rule In Effect in Alaska? The Roadless Rule was adopted in January 2001, but due to litigation did not become effective and operational until April 2003. After three months of being in effect on the Chugach NF and Tongass NF, the Roadless Rule was again judicially enjoined on a nationwide basis and was not operational for the next three years. In September 2006, the Roadless Rule was judicially reinstated and became operational on the Chugach NF, but the Tongass NF remained exempt from the Rule because USDA had issued a temporary rule in 2003 exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule while it examined whether a state-wide exemption was appropriate. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska set aside the 2003 Tongass Exemption and reinstated the Roadless Rule (with special instructions) on the Tongass National Forest. The District Court's ruling was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Supreme Court declined further review.

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

The State of Alaska will work closely with the USDA Forest Service. The State will establish a task force reporting to the Governor concerning options for roadless management that will inform the USDA's consideration of the State's Petition for rulemaking. The rulemaking will be analyzed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

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How are Tribal Governments designated as a cooperating agency?

If a Tribal Government decides to accept the Regional Forester's invitation to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking process, they should provide a written reply to the Regional Forester accepting the invitation. A memorandum of understanding will then be developed to establish specific responsibilities of the Forest Service and Tribal Government.

What are the responsibilities of a cooperating agency?

- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
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What authority does a cooperating agency provide?

Becoming a cooperating agency does not provide any new authority to a Tribal Government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service retain exclusive authority over the decisions related to the Alaska Roadless Rule.

When would this rulemaking take place and how much time would it take?

This rulemaking effort would begin as soon as possible and is estimated to be completed by June 2020. Meetings with cooperating agencies would be concentrated around milestones in the rulemaking/analysis process, which are likely to include: pre-scoping (August 2018); issue identification/alternative development (November 2018 to January 2019); post-comment period (November 2019 to January 2020); and final rule roll-out (May 2020). These times are initial estimates just to provide a sense of time commitment and could vary widely.

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For additional information on cooperating agency status, roles, or responsibilities, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, at 907-586-7089 or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.





File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Alfred Goozmer
Native Village of Tyonek
P.O. Box 82009
Tyonek, AK 99682

Dear President Goozmer:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

Both the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations encourage agency cooperation early in the environmental review process to help inform the analysis and establish a mechanism for active intergovernmental communication. Cooperating agency status under NEPA is determined under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) requirements for cooperating agency status (40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The CEQ regulations addressing cooperating agencies status (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5) implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analyses and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments" and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 U.S.C. §§ 4331(a), 4332(2)). The NFMA planning regulations (36 C.F.R. § 219.4(a)(1)(iv)(v)) provide direction to Forest Service responsible officials to encourage Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status where appropriate.



Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
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DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

First Chief John Kvasnikoff
Nanwalek IRA Council
P.O. Box 8028
Nanwalek, AK 99603

Dear First Chief Kvasnikoff:

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Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Encelewski
Ninilchik Traditional Council
P.O. Box 39070
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear President Encelewski:

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How are Tribal Governments designated as a cooperating agency?

If a Tribal Government decides to accept the Regional Forester's invitation to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking process, they should provide a written reply to the Regional Forester accepting the invitation. A memorandum of understanding will then be developed to establish specific responsibilities of the Forest Service and Tribal Government.

What are the responsibilities of a cooperating agency?

- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Casimero Aceveda Jr.
Organized Village of Kake
P.O. Box 316
Kake, AK 99830

Dear President Aceveda:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

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Both the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations encourage agency cooperation early in the environmental review process to help inform the analysis and establish a mechanism for active intergovernmental communication. Cooperating agency status under NEPA is determined under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) requirements for cooperating agency status (40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The CEQ regulations addressing cooperating agencies status (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5) implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analyses and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments" and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 U.S.C. §§ 4331(a), 4332(2)). The NFMA planning regulations (36 C.F.R. § 219.4(a)(1)(iv)(v)) provide direction to Forest Service responsible officials to encourage Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status where appropriate.



Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
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DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Frederick Olson Jr.
Organized Village of Kasaan
P.O. Box 26-Kasaan
Ketchikan, AK 99950

Dear President Olson:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Lee Wallace
Organized Village of Saxman
Route 2, Box 2, Saxman
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear President Wallace:

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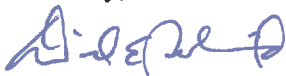
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Barry Morrison
Petersburg Indian Association
P.O. Box 1418
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear President Morrison:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
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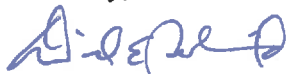
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DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Chief Patrick Norman
Port Graham Village Council
P.O. Box 5510
Port Graham, AK 99603

Dear Chief Norman:

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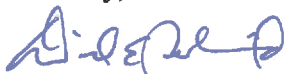
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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Crystal Collier
Seldovia Village Tribe
P.O. Box L
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear President Collier:

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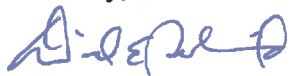
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For additional information on cooperating agency status, roles, or responsibilities, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, at 907-586-7089 or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.





File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

Chairman KathyHope Erickson
Sitka Tribe of Alaska
456 Katlian Street
Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Chairman Erickson:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

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Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
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Cooperating agencies are expected to provide their own funding to support their participation in this process.

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Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Jamie Bricker
Skagway Traditional Council
P.O. Box 1157
Skagway, AK 99840

Dear President Bricker:

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Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Penny Carty
Village of Salamatoff
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear President Carty:

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File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Richard Oliver
Wrangell Cooperative Association
P.O. Box 2021
Wrangell, AK 99929

Dear President Oliver:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

With this letter, I am inviting government-to-government consultation in advance of a formal public comment period and an opportunity for your Tribe to participate as a cooperating agency. I am seeking input from federally recognized Tribes concerning the development of an Alaska state-specific roadless rule for the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests. The USDA Forest Service wants to ensure Tribal perspectives are heard and fully considered in the development of an Alaska roadless rule.

An Alaska state-specific roadless rule would replace the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001 Roadless Rule), which was adopted into regulation in January 2001. The 2001 Roadless Rule prohibits road construction/reconstruction and timber harvest in areas designated as roadless on National Forest System lands, with certain exceptions. Alaska has about 14.8 million acres of roadless areas subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule. Provisions of a new Alaska state-specific roadless rule would apply to these 14.8 million acres, and would be based on providing for activities needed to further Alaska's economic development while conserving roadless areas for future generations.

Both the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations encourage agency cooperation early in the environmental review process to help inform the analysis and establish a mechanism for active intergovernmental communication. Cooperating agency status under NEPA is determined under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) requirements for cooperating agency status (40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The CEQ regulations addressing cooperating agencies status (40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.6, 1508.5) implement the NEPA mandate that Federal agencies responsible for preparing NEPA analyses and documentation do so "in cooperation with State and local governments" and other agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise (42 U.S.C. §§ 4331(a), 4332(2)). The NFMA planning regulations (36 C.F.R. § 219.4(a)(1)(iv)(v)) provide direction to Forest Service responsible officials to encourage Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status where appropriate.



Therefore, I would like to encourage your Tribe to be a cooperating agency. In that role, you will be able to:

- 1) Provide meaningful and early input on the range of alternatives to be considered.
- 2) Participate in coordination meetings.
- 3) As the lead agency, we may request you develop information and prepare environmental analysis concerning your area of special expertise.
- 4) Provide timely review and comment on the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to reflect your views and concerns on the adequacy of the document, alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts.

Cooperating agencies are expected to provide their own funding to support their participation in this process.

The USDA Forest Service, as the lead agency, retains the exclusive authority to make decisions on the land and resources it administers, and this authority cannot be delegated to a non-Federal entity. Cooperating agencies participation would enhance the analysis and result in a more informed USDA Forest Service decision. To foster clear understanding, the roles and responsibilities of the lead and cooperating agencies will be defined by a Memorandum of Understanding executed by all parties.

Enclosed is a list of Frequently Asked Questions, as well as a document providing information and reference links which describe the cooperating agency process to assist you. If you would like to join us as a cooperating agency, please reply within 60 days from the date of this letter. If you choose not to be a cooperating agency, the USDA Forest Service will continue to honor our commitment for meaningful government-to-government consultation throughout the planning process.

Tribes, whether or not participating as participating agencies, will be invited to consult in advance of any formal public comment periods. Consultation for rulemaking may occur at the regional, forest, and district levels, as well as at the Washington Office (WO) level. I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with your local Forest Service line officer, and we look forward to assisting you in meeting your consultation needs. If you have any questions about what it means to be a cooperating agency, or about the consultation process, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, via email at mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us or phone at 907-586-7089.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you throughout this rulemaking effort and associated processes.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

Enclosures: (2)

cc: Robin Dale, Chad VanOrmer, Terri Marceron, Earl Stewart, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Carla Casulucan, John Kinsner, Ken Tu, R10 FLT's



Topic: Frequently Asked Questions Concerning an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule

When and Where Was the Roadless Rule In Effect in Alaska? The Roadless Rule was adopted in January 2001, but due to litigation did not become effective and operational until April 2003. After three months of being in effect on the Chugach NF and Tongass NF, the Roadless Rule was again judicially enjoined on a nationwide basis and was not operational for the next three years. In September 2006, the Roadless Rule was judicially reinstated and became operational on the Chugach NF, but the Tongass NF remained exempt from the Rule because USDA had issued a temporary rule in 2003 exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule while it examined whether a state-wide exemption was appropriate. In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska set aside the 2003 Tongass Exemption and reinstated the Roadless Rule (with special instructions) on the Tongass National Forest. The District Court's ruling was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Supreme Court declined further review.

Why is USDA's Forest Service beginning to work on an Alaska Specific Roadless Rule now?

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and Alaska Governor Bill Walker have reached agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

What are the next steps the Forest Service will be taking?

The Secretary directed the USDA Forest Service to begin working with State of Alaska representatives to develop an Alaska state-specific roadless rule under the Administrative Procedures Act. The intent is to develop a state-specific roadless rule that will address the State of Alaska's concerns regarding roadless areas essential for infrastructure, timber, energy, mining, access, and transportation to further Alaska's economic development, while still protecting unique areas for generations to come.

How will the State of Alaska be involved?

The State of Alaska will work closely with the USDA Forest Service. The State will establish a task force reporting to the Governor concerning options for roadless management that will inform the USDA's consideration of the State's Petition for rulemaking. The rulemaking will be analyzed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

What is the timeframe for completion of an Alaska-specific roadless rule?

- *Late August, 2018* – begin a scoping period on the proposed rulemaking.
- *July 2019* – publish a draft environmental impact statement (EIS), start a comment period on the draft.
- *April 2020* – publish a final EIS.
- *June 1, 2020* – publish a final Alaska Roadless Rule



ALASKA ROADLESS RULE COOPERATING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES (July 26, 2018)

The Forest Service is the lead agency for the development of the Alaska Roadless Rule. Cooperating agencies may be Federal, State, local, or Tribal agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to an environmental issue that should be addressed in an environmental impact statement (EIS). The State of Alaska is a cooperating agency in this rulemaking effort because of its expertise on the economic development concerns related to roadless area management within Alaska. Alaska Native Tribes have been invited to be a cooperating agency due to their expertise on subsistence and potential impacts to specific communities within Alaska.

How are Tribal Governments designated as a cooperating agency?

If a Tribal Government decides to accept the Regional Forester's invitation to participate in the Alaska roadless rulemaking process, they should provide a written reply to the Regional Forester accepting the invitation. A memorandum of understanding will then be developed to establish specific responsibilities of the Forest Service and Tribal Government.

What are the responsibilities of a cooperating agency?

- Assist in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process at the earliest possible time.
- Participate in the public involvement processes, which help define and frame the issues to be addressed in the EIS.
- Review information and analyses (upon request from the Forest Service) for which the Tribal Government has special expertise.
- Contribute staff support and other resources at the Forest Service's request to enhance the NEPA team's capability.
- Share freely any information and data relevant to the NEPA analysis.
- Rely on its own funds to support its participation in the NEPA process.

What authority does a cooperating agency provide?

Becoming a cooperating agency does not provide any new authority to a Tribal Government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service retain exclusive authority over the decisions related to the Alaska Roadless Rule.

When would this rulemaking take place and how much time would it take?

This rulemaking effort would begin as soon as possible and is estimated to be completed by June 2020. Meetings with cooperating agencies would be concentrated around milestones in the rulemaking/analysis process, which are likely to include: pre-scoping (August 2018); issue identification/alternative development (November 2018 to January 2019); post-comment period (November 2019 to January 2020); and final rule roll-out (May 2020). These times are initial estimates just to provide a sense of time commitment and could vary widely.

Where can I get additional information on cooperating agencies' responsibilities?

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For additional information on cooperating agency status, roles, or responsibilities, please contact Melinda Hernandez Burke, Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, at 907-586-7089 or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.





File Code: 1560

Date: July 30, 2018

President Victoria Demmert
Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
P.O. Box 418
Yakutat, AK 99689

Dear President Demmert:

The State of Alaska submitted a petition for rulemaking to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. The Secretary and the Governor of Alaska, Bill Walker, have reached an agreement to cooperatively undertake a state-specific roadless rule to address the State's roadless management and access concerns on the national forests in Alaska. The USDA Forest Service is in the process of convening the resources and personnel to move forward in support of this agreement.

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Sincerely,



DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

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File Code: 1950
Date: AUG - 9 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Bart Garber
Executive Director
Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Mr. Garber:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-government consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion. I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed so I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Alaska Region

P.O. Box 21628
Juneau AK 99802-1628

File Code: 1950

Date: AUG -8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Larry Evanoff, President
Chenega Bay IRA Council
P.O. Box 8079
Chenega Bay, AK 99574

Dear Mr. Evanoff:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Gary Harrison
Traditional Chief
Chickaloon Village
P.O. Box 1105
Chickaloon, AK 99674

Dear Mr. Harrison:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

Mr. Mike Tucker
President
Knik Tribal Council
P.O. Box 871565
Wasilla, AK 99687-1565

RECORD COPY

Dear Mr. Tucker:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date: AUG - 8 2018

Mr. John Kvasnikoff
First Chief
Nanwalek IRA Council
PO. Box 8028
Nanwalek, AK 99603

RECORD COPY

Dear Mr. Kvasnikoff:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date: **AUG -8 2018**

RECORD COPY

Mr. Aaron Leggett
President
Native Village of Eklutna
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, AK 99567

Dear Mr. Leggett:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Darrel Olsen
President
Native Village of Eyak
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, AK 99574

Dear Mr. Olsen:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date: AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. David Totemoff Sr.
President
Native Village of Tatitlek
P.O. Box 171
Tatitlek, AK 99677

Dear Mr. Totemoff:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG -8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Alfred Goozmer
President
Native Village of Tyonek
P.O. Box 82009
Tyonek, AK 99682

Dear Mr. Goozmer:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

I remain committed to exercising our special relationship for government-to-government consultation. I acknowledge that this change in the roadless rulemaking process may create some confusion. I am dedicated to ensuring a meaningful dialogue as we proceed so I encourage you to request a consultation meeting with Terri Marceron, Forest Supervisor for the Chugach National Forest, at 907-743-9525.

If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date:

AUG -8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Richard Encelewski
President
Ninilchik Traditional Council
P.O. Box 39070
Ninilchik, AK 99639

Dear Mr. Encelewski:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950
Date: AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Mr. Patrick Norman, Chief
Port Graham Village Council
P.O. Box 5510
Port Graham, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Norman:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date: AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Ms. Crystal Collier, President
Seldovia Village Tribe
P.O. Box L
Seldovia, AK 99663

Dear Ms. Collier:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer





File Code: 1950

Date: AUG - 8 2018

RECORD COPY

Ms. Penny Carty
President
Village of Salamatoff
P.O. Box 2682
Kenai, AK 99611

Dear Ms. Carty:

In a recent letter dated July 30, 2018, I extended an invitation for you to consult and participate as a cooperating agency about a state-specific roadless rule to address the State of Alaska's roadless management and access concerns on the National Forests in Alaska. It was recently decided that the roadless rulemaking process will only apply to the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska and not include the Chugach National Forest. Due to the revised limited scope of the rulemaking process that excludes lands in Southcentral Alaska, I must recind my offer for you to participate as a cooperating agency.

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If you have any questions about this invitation for consultation, please contact the Alaska Region Tribal Relations Program Manager, Melinda Hernandez Burke, at 907-586-7089, or mhernandezburke@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. SCHMID
Acting Regional Forester

cc: Robin Dale, Melinda Hernandez Burke, Chad Vanormer

